

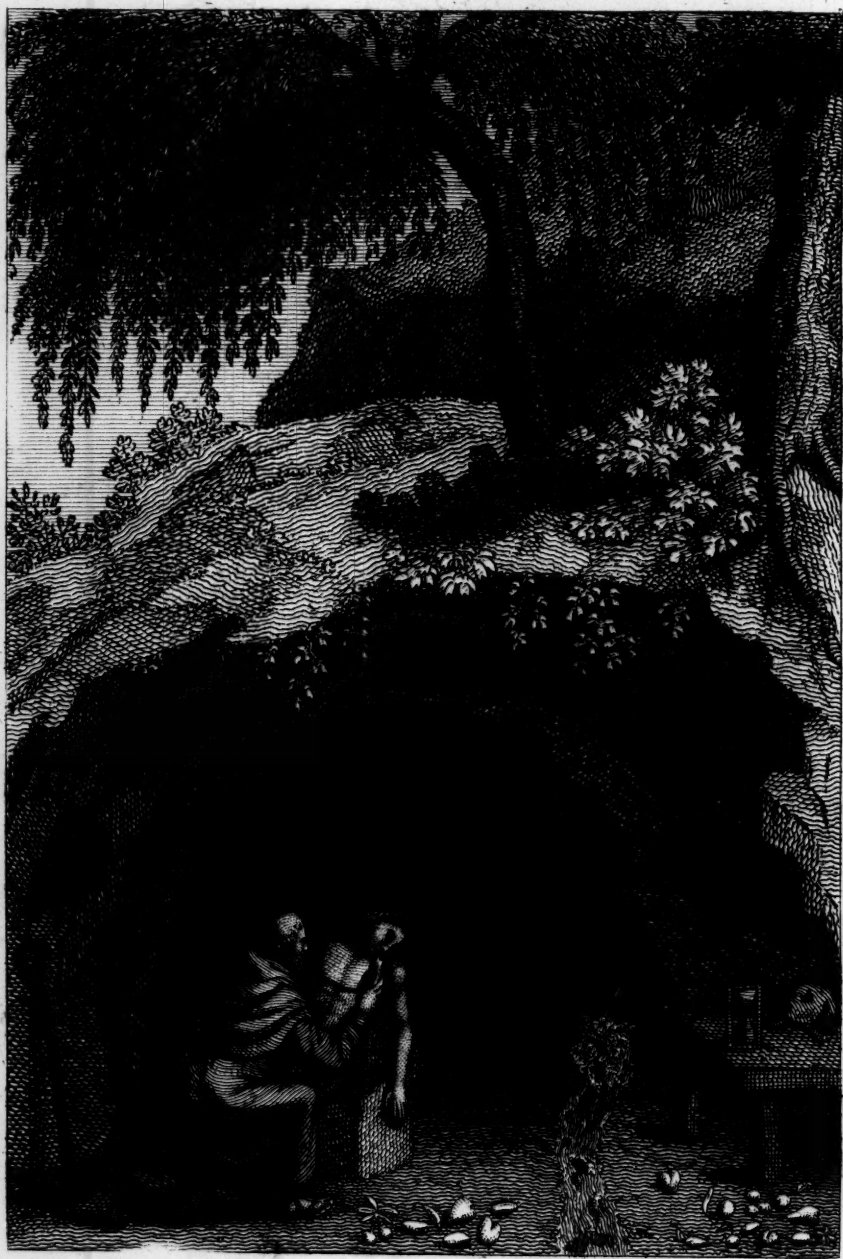
FAMILIAR
LETTERS

FROM A

GENTLEMAN

TO A FEW

SELECT FRIENDS.



The Hermit succouring Distress.

F A M I L I A R
L E T T E R S

FROM A
G E N T L E M A N

TO A FEW
S E L E C T F R I E N D S ;

WITH SOME
O R I G I N A L P O E M S

O N
V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S .

L O N D O N :

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THE
P. R. E. S. I. D. E. N. T.
O. F. T. H. E. U. N. I. T. E. D. S. T. A. T. E. S.

THE following is a list of the products of the United States, which are sold in the foreign market, and which are of great value to the country. The list is given for the purpose of showing the extent of the trade, and the importance of the various articles. It is not intended to be a complete list, but only to give a general idea of the kinds of goods which are exported.

The list is divided into two parts, the first containing the names of the various articles, and the second containing the names of the persons or firms to whom they are sold. The list is given in alphabetical order, and the names of the persons or firms are given in full.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following Letters are the produce of the Author's leisure hours during the course of a few years, as their dates will shew. The habit of a friendly, sociable intimacy that he lived in with the subjects of this correspondence, induced him to reserve copies of them for the pleasure of reviewing, as it were, those friends at a distance,

tance, which a perusal of them sometimes afforded him. They contain the natural effusions of his heart upon a variety of subjects, with some *bagatelle*, some gaiety, and some gravity intermixed; and as the Author has endeavoured to steer clear of all personal invective and ridicule, he readily resigns himself to the danger of being taxed for dullness.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author (on the repeated importunities of a particular friend, for whose well-known literary abilities he bears the highest veneration and respect) is, at last, prevailed on to let the following pages make their appearance in public, which it is highly improbable they had ever done, but for the above reason. As such, he hopes the Reader will view them through the mirror of candour, which is all the Author either flatters himself with or desires,

FAMI-

ADVERTISEMENT

THE Author (as the repeated
treatment of a particular point, for
people well-known to my administration
has the highest satisfaction and respect)
is, to the present time, in the
ing papers more than anywhere in the
world it is highly probable that they
are done, but for the more rapid
the paper and the more rapid
through the means of various
all the other parts of the
I have to say that
the paper will be
of the paper will be
I have to say that

F A M I L I A R
L E T T E R S.

LETTER I.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Jan. 1, 1776.

DEAR MADAM,

I REALLY do not know whether
this letter will be a spirited scribble
or not, though my ink has this moment

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B

received

received the aid of some powerful punch to thin it ; but believe me it will not be destitute of that sort of essence which makes the cup of life go down more pleasantly than it otherwise could or would do without it, and that is a happy compound of agreeable anticipations, and little solitudes, at a distance to, for, and about the friend we esteem : in other words, the sweet sensations of genuine, sound friendship. Such sensations, believe me, Mrs. Bl—r and self feel in no small degree for your Ladyship. You make me so vain, by turning me into a saint, that I almost think I shall be extravagant enough to build a shrine in my life-time, if only from the flattering idea of your honouring it after my depositure with a visit now and then, to scatter a chaste sprig or

or two of rosemary upon it : but I must insist on your devotion's wearing no holes in the pavement, like the over pious folks of Canterbury heretofore, by a repetition of restless orisons at the feet of their Saint Thomas. I also strictly prohibit all beads, crucifixes, rosaries, *Agnus-Dei*'s, all the way down to holy water ; for, as I intend to preside over spirits of intelligence, I shall assuredly haunt your shoes, your pillow, and your pockets. I shall put corns into the first, head-ach into the second, and disappointment into the third. You shall quarrel with your pen, disrelish your books, and let even friendship expire on your bosom ; and, instead of being an exile, as you talk of, I will magically and saintifically convey you, by means of my most holy balloon, a

thousand leagues, at least, beyond *terra incognita*: but now that I have told you what I shall be able to do, let me tell you what I mean to do. I mean, in consequence of my faintship, to guide you into the flowery paths of Elysium, to enjoy the delights of perpetual sunshine and elegant verdure; mingled with the choicest productions of nature, to feast your eyes upon. To all this I shall add a celestial band, to charm your ears, and as our converse will be of no mortal mould, what a sweet perspective do we not already enjoy! you will say—— Mrs. Bl—r received the *et-cæteras*, and means to take no steps in what you mention about them till we have the pleasure to see you again, which we are happy to know is not at many days distance: however, she sends you no wishes,

wishes, either good, bad, or indifferent, because she means to write them ; and as to Charles, he sends good wishes, because he cannot write them.—So concludes

Your affectionate friend,

BL—R.

B 3

LET-

LETTER II.

Mr. BL——R to Mrs. R——.

Jan. 29, 1776.

MADAM,

I DARE say you will be not a little surpris'd with this address from a party whose acquaintance is so much in its infancy, till the bearer, your friend, explains the reason for it. As a firm well-wisher of your's, he tells you, with concern, that it is currently believed you intend to bestow your charms upon a certain Cantab, whose name the bearer will acquaint you with. It is the astonishment of your intimates, that such a connection should have

have ever once entered your head — a prostitution is the fitter term for it, as, most surely, your charms, your fortune, your situation, and, above all, your own inward satisfaction, would fall a sacrifice to a man, whose ignorance of the world must not only render him totally unqualified for the sociable companion to an amiable, easy woman, but every way fitted, if not by profession, by disposition, to play the tyrant and destroyer of your domestic and mental happiness. Think, dear Madam, of your present situation, and its many commands. Review the terrible contrast of your liberty lost — the fatal knot tied, which nothing less than death can untie. — Such, however, are the independent sentiments of a sincere friend, and they must carry their own apology with

[8]

them. — The bearer will give you
the writer's name, when he knows
the lines give you no offence.

Adieu,

BL—R.

LET.

LETTER III.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Feb. 16, 1776,

DEAR M—,

JUST returned from K—, and so
 jaded with mattadores and red aces
 is my faint, that she despairs of visiting
 Vanity Hall to-morrow evening, as you
 so obligingly desire, though she is
 equally sensible of your intentions—if
 she should find herself well enough,
 will, notwithstanding her present lan-
 guor, aim at J— S—. We have left
 C— at school. Mrs. Bl—r had on her
 chintz — elegant, indeed! Signora was
 struck with it, and said, she must have
 one,

one. She inquired when we saw you ; the answer was, Sunday se'ennight, a little while in the afternoon.—— So it ended.—— Her friend, Mrs. P—, appears to me to be very well, though she persuades herself into a belief that she is ill. Was she fond of physicians, there would be some good meaning in it ; warm water and bleeding, or their tantamounts, would be the word.—— I am very glad your fatigue is dying away ; may its last gasp arrive this evening ! When we see you again, you shall have a laugh about a *voleur* going to make his grand attack upon our coach at K— this evening.—— Mrs. Bl—r has got a cold somehow ; whether from the window where we drank tea, or in passing through the chilling, warm, half-cold, moderate, strange, aguish, intermittent, climate

climate of our's, I cannot divine. As for myself, I vow to G—d, I have not told so much as one fib, either circumstantial or direct, all this good day, and yet I have four blisters on my tongue's tip. It must be the climate ; deuce take it, it must be, and shall be that, and nothing else.—Our best wishes kiss your fair hand. So writeth

Your affectionate friend,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER IV.

Mr. BL—R to Miss M—E.

March 5, 1776.

DEAR MADAM,

I AM happy to read, under my renowned heroine of denial's own hand too, that she has been able to summon a laugh, after passing the ordeal of the other day. Our friend, whom we esteem full as much as you can do, has certainly had a slice of the apple of curiosity, and could I for a moment transplant the tree of paradise to a Kentish soil, I should have little doubts about the matter. The endless thirst after gratifying curiosity, like cold water
admi-

administered in a high fever, may give a momentary allay, but is sure to add fuel to the disorder. To be completely wretched in this world, in my mind, is to indulge a ceaseless anxiety to know the affairs of others. I really do not know a more tormenting passion; nor can pity be better bestowed than upon a sincere friend one loves and regards, labouring under such an infliction. You plainly see an instance before us, where this itch is capable of breaking down the very boundaries of good sense, regard, gratitude, with every social and sensible affection — what pity that it should do so! The best way I believe for us is to look upon it as a speck in the sun, which, though a slight imperfection in our eye, lessens not the intrinsic value of the body that wears it.

Banish

Banish from your breast every idea of the late distressful situation you was thrown into, and in its room give us an idea, when you mean to let us enjoy the social hour of chat, by a welcome fire side blazing with the sparks of longing desire to see you, and to share in a hearty laugh at all your late cross questions. Let it be soon, we pray, and your compliance will literally make it cross questions and commands.

Adieu,

BL——R.

L E T-

LETTER V.

Mr. BL——R to Mr. S——.

April 20, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

IF ye are not all gone to the shades,
 (as I fear, by receiving no tidings of
 any of you lately) I will call your at-
 tention for a moment, to inform you I
 have received so flagrant an instance of
 ingratitude from Mr. ——, as obliges
 me to wash my hands of that family in
 future; I have told him so this very
 day by letter, and therefore, consistent
 with my friendship to your fireside, I
 now sit down to tell you, that you must
 not be surpris'd it is now put out of
 my

my power to pay those attentions to my pretty muse I had intended, supposing you hold your resolves to let her pay her visit to that house. A copy of my letter, which I shall shortly send you, will unriddle the whole. I should not acquit myself to my own inclinations, could I think I failed, in the smallest point, to deserve that regard I believe you and your's to possess for me; as such, this openness in me is no more than, I should think, the natural result of a sincere communication. Consider well, before you send her. If she does come, how hurt shall I be to think that I cannot see her! — Adieu, and believe me really, not professionally,

Your's, &c.

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER VI.

Mr. BL——R to Mr. S——.

Aug. 30, 1776.

DEAR FRIEND,

JUST returned from the W— family, where I left them all together, except V—— J——, who dislocated his shoulder by a fall from his horse the other evening. He was galloping in a lane against his brother C——, when they rode against a cow, suddenly crossing the way, and there they were all sprawling together, men as well as animals. After remaining speechless four hours, V—— J—— revived, and is

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C

now

now on the road of recovery. C——
 ailed little, though he did not speak for
 one hour. You naturally will ask,
 where I was at this terrible moment ? I
 will tell you ; I was in a *partie quarrée*
 in Mrs. L——'s coach, returning to
 W—— again, after dining with V——
 J——, at whose house we had been
 unusually merry. Thank my stars, I
 was not horsed that day ! Such acci-
 dents too often admit of ugly interpre-
 tations. The protection of the petti-
 coat, you see, saved me here : indeed,
 in all times and places I never knew a
 protection to equal it. Miss B——
 knowing all the parties, makes me give
 you this long detail.—We have, at
 last, got weather good enough to keep
 every reasonable person in good humour,
 and happily skreened, as you are, from
 too

too much of the influence of the dog star, by the friendly interference of that stupendous ridge of mountains overlooking your delicious vale, teeming with luxurious liberality all around, your sweet mansion appears in all the true air of an Italian villa. What an agreeable circumstance to be sequestered there, when compared with the situation of some honest Britons of our acquaintance just now in America; I sincerely feel for them, and am certain you equally sympathize with me—— Heaven put a speedy end to the calamity, is the hearty wish of

Your ever sincere friend,

BL——R.

LETTER VII.

Mr. BL——R to Mrs. B——.

Jan. 4, 1777.

MADAM,

YOUR agreeable letter did not fail to entertain as well as please me exceedingly ; I say, exceedingly, because it was wrote in a style far beyond that of an epistolary vein. Your conjecture about the rebel may be fact, for any thing I know to the contrary, though I much doubt it ; for had she been like yourself, I am confident she would have had too much goodnature to keep me all this time in suspense.

There

There is an unrivalled degree of generosity in the amiables of your sex, (you see, I make my exceptions) and in that most important of thefts, the stealing of hearts, I scarcely ever knew an instance of cruelty attending the crime: the result has generally been, either to restore it again unhurt, or send a better in exchange. I think this clearly proves my musical thief to have been of the male kind. I am glad the —— was agreeable; I was doubtful of its pleasing, as I know that taste and fancy lay so decidedly in your sex's province. I entreat you to return my best thanks to Mr. —— for his very friendly account, which I take the liberty to answer through the medium of this, not having present leisure to answer it separately. Tell him, he is fit for a court—he has

the knack of flattery—I only wish I deserved all he says; I should be more vain to own it, than he to write it. With respect to the all-charming fair one that he paints in such glowing colours, I do not know whether I was not in luck to be sixty miles out of her atmosphere—there is no approaching comets without danger; and to have been scorched within the sphere of her attractions would have quite undone me: besides, my heart is already three parts of a cinder; and ask yourself only, what kind of figure a man must cut in a lady's eyes, under such an unfortunate predicament? But setting aside her personal qualities (never to be ranked with those of her mind) her harmony might have killed me outright, and then consider what a loss your Ladyship would

would have had?—No laugh, joke, or song of mine! nor any thing by way of substitute for you to sing better than my epitaph, set to music by Doctor A——, and accompanied by Mr. V——'s fiddle. And still you do not tell me her name all this time; I think, however, I can outlive that shock, by the extraordinary aids of my own self-created philosophy, till your kindness relieves my suspense, when I cannot fail to revere a character of your describing, so characteristically clever, though I have no personal acquaintance with the lady.—Do me the favour of being remembered, with all respect, to our social friends, who admire the hours of harmony as much as either your Ladyship, or your humble

BL——R.

C 4

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Mr. BL——R to Mr. W——.

June 3, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I AM doubly unfortunate. I had not the pleasure to see you, and your agreeable rib, when at this place, and it will be out of my power to visit S—, as I wished. My curiosity is not a little excited, believe me; and however much mortified at my present disappointment, I will take a future opportunity. G—— receives me on Sunday, and D—— the night following, where I must abide three or four days amongst the sons of Comus,

Comus, in spite of the many claims upon me more southward, Assure Mrs. W—— that I wish for nothing so ardently as to see her, after what her writings have already proclaimed her. How I regret that society possesses so few her equals ! Live long, and happily, is my first wish to you both !—

Adieu,

BL——R.

LET.

LETTER IX.

Mr, BL——R to J——C——, Esq,

Dec. 11, 1777,

DEAR C——,

I ARRIVED this identical evening by owl light ; inquired for your worship, and being told you had not returned, ventured, nevertheless, to take my quarters without one grain of ceremony, or fear. I know now, that you will be very full of concern, &c. that you was not ready to receive me. It is true, it would have given me infinite pleasure to have met you in your own mansion, but I beg of you not to be uneasy,

uneasy, “ that I was all alone by myself.”—No, Sir, I was very amply and fully employed ; *videlicet*, I drank my tea, eat toast, took several turns about your parlour, sat down by the fire, stirred it several times, (always looked serious at those times) then read several pages of a most entertaining account (or rather history) of M—— ; was much pleased with what I read, and I hope a little edified into the bargain : I then shut the book, walked about the room again, hummed an air of my own, half a dozen times over at least.—All these matters took up much time. My supper came in, I had to carve it, (employment again, you see) then I had to eat it ; I am this moment drinking *à votre santé* in a bumper ; the bumper off, I am going to stir the fire again ;

(no compliment to your coals by the bye.) Now, let me ask you, if I have not clearly demonstrated, that I wanted neither employment nor variety, since I set foot in C—— house? As it chanced that I was not to be made happy with your company this night, I had all that I could reasonably wish for. I had great civility and hospitality shewn me in your absence, which, here, I should most certainly thank you for, did I not think the formality of it would offend you. Be it known then, that I shall be responsible at and in the neighbourhood of N—— for the space of one fortnight; in the course of that period I hope I may be fortunate enough to kiss your hand, and to assure you in person how much I am your's.

BL——R.

P. S.

P. S. Let me not forget, in my catalogue of amusement, to add, I robb'd your lavender bottle of part of its contents. There was so little of it taken though, that if you do your very worst, I defy you to make more of it than petty larceny.

LET-

LETTER X.

Mr. BL——R to Miss S——.

Feb. 12, 1778.

DEAR MADAM,

MY poetry and my pleasures all for-
 took me when I left honest A—,
 so that you must expect nothing from
 me now, but a dull account, in hum-
 ble prose, of my commissions for you ;
 and first, I beg permission to present
 your ladyship with a pair of boots—
 Was I to present them in an elegant
 style, I should say, I beg leave to lay
 them at your feet ; indeed, I wish I
 was near enough to see them on ; but,
 alas !

alas ! two-and-forty miles is not my next door neighbour ; therefore I must stretch my fancy upon the occasion. I expect to hear that you, shortly, will encounter the noble hill of R—— on a dirty day ; walk all the lanes around your house ; trip it through Mrs. M——'s pastures ; get over ankle in water and mud alternately ; look big afterwards, and bid defiance to all bad weather (for that is really the use of all walking boots.) With regard to your stocking and shoe, they must remain with me till I have the pleasure to present them in person, (if ever) for the following good reasons : the first I find a charm for a sore throat I got at N—— last week, which has three quarters killed me ; as to the latter, was I without it, I must die of absolute thirst ; for, between my man
C——

C—— and a sad dog of a cat, not a single glass is left me to drink out of. Thus you see the great equity of my detaining both, more particularly when

“ Pleas’d with whate’er belongs to you,
 “ Be it a stocking or a shoe.”

As for my poor fiddles, they would send their compliments, could they speak, but the influenza of dullness having seized them ever since they spoke before you—there is as complete a sympathetic stupidity between fiddles and fidler, as you would ever wish or desire. We all three most humbly hope and pray for your pity however; that we stand in need of, and more. Is your harpsichord arrived yet? I shall expect a copious description of it, with all its excel-

excellencies. As to B——'s travels, all I will say of them is, I wish you to read them with much attention. C——'s sermons will be a feast upon a rainy Sunday, and make you the less regret the absence of a lecture from Dr. H—, when you are not disposed to visit your pew. They will not only give you all that exalted satisfaction your own well-regulated mind would wish to suggest to you, but confirm you in it by sensible truths told you by a most sensible divine. But I forget I am preaching all this while, and I cannot afford it, without a good fat living.---Adieu, and accept my good wishes ten thousand times multiplied.

BL——R.

LETTER XI.

Mr. BL——R to W—— P——, *Esq.*

April 10, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

ARE you dead? if you are, be so good as say so by return of post. If you are alive, there's a sufficient apology for your not being able to write. Whether I am alive or dead makes no difference, as this place is ever barren of intelligence, and therefore I trust you know the reason, whenever I omit to write. Has the late inverted system of politics palsied your right hand, or destroyed your nerves? What illiterate,
unscrib-

unscribbling genius has laid an embargo on your pen? For Heaven's sake tell me, either by yourself or proxy, that I may instantly dispossess you of so unfociable, so un-political a dæmon, in this age and land of fighting and squabbling, both on this side and the other side of the Atlantic, when there is so much preparing, embodying, marching and counter-marching; in short, when there is so much to do about nothing every where—all, all fine subjects, and copious enough in conscience for the pen of so fertile an imagination as your worship's. However, if you have but leisure enough just to say that you exist, it will give a sincere pleasure to your as sincere friend, &c.

BL——R.

LETTER XII.

Mr. BL——R to J—— S——, *Esq.*

June 4, 1778.

MY friend will receive, inclosed, what he writes for. I am glad Miss S—— is so well. The smallest comment I can make upon her is, that I should be glad to see her companion, Mademoiselle C——, as near a copy of her as possible. Good sense will readily point out the imitation of the Graces, and though virtue and goodness of heart lay a most admirable foundation, there still is wanting some of those captiv-
vating

vating decorations, that never fail to give a finishing hand to the contour.--- The difference in the two parties I do not confine to person only, there are, besides, certain genteel delicacies in Miss S—— equally worthy of imitation.—The varieties of this place, you tell me, were agreeable to her. I am glad they were so. Examples in public were, certainly, good opportunities to form her own system by; and the family she was amongst would do their parts within doors: your fears about her, my friend, believe me, are totally unnecessary. She applies to improvement duly and daily, and her pleasures abroad make the agreeable sauce to her studies at home. The —— will certainly be convicted, and glad I am, (for the honour of this country) to see the law

not inflected in so material an instance by the dazzling influence of wealth and honours. So infamous a scene is not often met with in history, and such a robbery of a family can only be exceeded by a Cleopatra or a Messalina, who had a stock of modesty sufficient for the plundering whole empires. Adieu.

Your's always,

BL—R.

L E T.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Nov. 6, 1778.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR amiable display of the scene
furrounding your dying old friend
(*sans compliment*) would have made a
much higher finished subject for the
chapel at K——, than the piece of
dawbing now there, in which, by the
bye, I think I could point out a tole-
rable number of defects. Would to
Heaven we had surprised you on the
terrace! How must you have stared and
paused, and paused and stared! The

number of admirers, my friend, were not at the gown—had there been no superior attractions, I hold up the hand of defiance to all gowns on earth.—

There are more judges of nature than of art, and trust me, that amongst my sex, we can judge with precision upon the merits and attractions of an agreeable female, when we betray a total ignorance of the perfections of a painting by the hands of a Holben, a Reubens, or a Vandyke. Your good old friend giving his blessing to yourself and his family; what a delightful picture! It would have been taken for a Jacob and his children. I know of nothing that would have made the story doubtful, but a certain archness beaming through a corner of the eye of a friend of ours, in spite of gravity assumed. Why, as
you

you observe, shall curiosity continue to canker the happiness that our comforts bring along with them? But such is the curse of sense that brings such taxes along with them, as ought, in conscience, to pay off the national debt in five years, for our mental sufferings in that course of time dearly earn all their rewards. If we will be unhappy, we must be unhappy; in other words, if reason mean nothing, then the product will be no more.—We had an agreeable day yesterday, rendered so by good spirits on all sides of the room. You was much wished for, to add your share of sprightliness to the merriment. We quadrilled it, till some of us, I believe, were heartily tired: learn it by all means, if only for the gratification I should have in leaning over your chair
to

to see you revoke, lose a *sans prendre*,
vole, &c. &c. How charitable that
wish! Let us see you soon. If you
wish to laugh, you will come; if not,
pray stay where you are, for my nerves
are too weak at present to bear up
against grief, particularly of your's.

Adieu,

BL—R.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

Mr. BL——R to A——S——, Esq.

March 10, 1779.

MY dear friend's favour of the 8th instant gave me the highest pleasure. Sorry, though, that I cannot say with truth, I am well enough now to answer it in the manner it deserves, and I wish. After all, I have wrote to my fair friend in the boots, to which I refer you. I do not know whether you will not think me excusable in my brevity here; indeed, I find a strong propensity to be very lazy, and should like to have your fireside save me the trouble of saying

saying any thing but simple yes or no, to all their lively chit-chat, for at least the whole evening ; when that is the case, be assured it must be very *la, la*, with me. From a vile cold I am flunk into all the languor imaginable, and become Chastity's very near relation, believe me, more especially since I am out of your Lordship's seducing company. I am as timorous as a maid, and full as harmless ; and I do not know whether three syllables of an *entendre*, though but whispered, might not create a blush—mercy on us ! what a terrible taking to be in ! you will say.—The affair I went upon last week was finished to the mutual happiness of parent and son, and my interference, I hope, crowned the future welfare of the young man. Such opportunities give a heart-felt
plea-

pleasure.—But I must quit my pen for a moment, to hold converse with two originals, “much of a muchness,” with Parson G—— and his clerk Tommy —— I really thought it them at first, and as fully expected they were come to inform me, that from the expertness of their recent practice in justicehip, they had got fouse into the Crown office.—Now they are gone. Their story was long and intricate in its prelude, so desired them to commit it to paper, and bring it for examination to-morrow morning.—So soon as I have finished this dedication to you, am I to be entertained with a sprightly genius, who is to let me do just as I please. I wish you made the trio ; I then believe I should bring out a word or two upon table.—Adieu—Accept every wish

wish to yourself and rib. I send never
 a one to my muse ; because as I write
 to her by the same packet, that would
 be rank tautology, and smell too strong
 of the *country petty-fogger*.——I am my
 friend's most sincere, &c.

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XV.

Mr. BL——R to Mrs. E——.

Aug. 20, 1779.

DEAR MADAM,

IN what terms shall I express my gratitude for all your feelings of anxietude and regard towards Mrs. Bl—r? The cold tribute of thanks is so faint a return, and so very short of my wishes, that I believe my best eloquence on the occasion will be silence. As you flatter us with the pleasing expectation of your company so soon, I will venture to anticipate a pleasure you have so long wished for, that of seeing our little boy
upon

upon canvas. The picture is, at last, finished, and does no small honour to the taste and execution of the artist.— The extreme archness so happily thrown into the child's countenance, added to his natural comeliness, gives him the air of something so much above mortal, that I don't know whether I may not be justified in pronouncing him a cherubim. After this florid description of him I must let you into a profound secret, by telling you that Mrs. Bl—r and your humble compose a part of the groupe. I shall make no further comment upon that part of the picture than just to say, that Mrs. Bl—r speaks, as well as looks. As to what I may do, is totally immaterial. Come, my dear Madam, and see it with all its merits and demerits, for I know your unbi-
 asse

affled judgement too well to hesitate upon
renouncing any opinion of my own.
To induce you to come soon, we will
give you the meeting half way. Adieu,
and accept every affectionate wish of
two, in the number of your sincere
friends.

BL—R.

VOL. I.

E

LET-

LETTER XVI.

Mr. BL—R to Lady C—.

Jan. 4, 1780,

Past midnight, with my pate full of wine,

DEAR MADAM,

THOUGH I am only just parted from you, and in a condition to be sure, in your ideas, very unfit for any thing, or any place but bed, yet the whim of the hour, or call it what you please, seizes me, I must therefore write; if I did not, I should think, and then, as Pope said heretofore, “for my soul I should not sleep a wink.” At such an hour, in such a situation,
and

and such a state of mind too, I think I cannot do better than give you my thoughts as they arise, unfashioned, untutored, and of course unguarded; so have at you: suppose them to be, if you will, upon drunkenness, and my subject that figurative text of, "And he reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man." Was I a clergyman of any church, (I care not a straw of what in particular, for this purpose) I do not know a text in the whole book of sacred writ so suited to compose a sermon upon with so little expence of thought or study. A copious descant, as it were, naturally arises out of it. So much room for describing the folly (and, indeed, sin) attending drunkenness, particularly if accompanied with acts to render it sinful, is a

field large enough for a moderate minded country priest to lose himself in. To me, who mean to take up the cudgel as a layman, the subject may be greatly defended, and the words in a good measure explained away, by reading them with a various comment ; as for example—To reel, what is that but to be industrious ? witness the daily proofs at Halifax, and a large neighbourhood surrounding it, where almost every man of the lowest class (and woman too) are reeling from morn to night. Their reeling is in the very height of business, of course they must be sober—To stagger is not always to be interpreted to do so from the effects of drinking, for it is well known, that to stagger is to stare, to be astonished, surprised, &c. &c. and accordingly, in
common

common expression, nothing is more applicable than to say, “ My resolution was staggered ;”—“ I staggered again when I heard the report ”—“ My surprise was so great at first, that a fly might have knocked me down, I staggered so ”—“ The joy and the suddenness of it was so much, I was scarcely myself, and staggered just as if I had been drunk ”——Now, if these expressions be well known facts, and I appeal to common sense if they are not, I think it may very fairly be deduced, that the soberest man, and most abstemious woman, may both reel and stagger after drinking nothing stronger than mere water. After saying this, it plainly appears to be a commendable quality to reel and stagger, as those who do it

the most are clearly proved, in the above stating, to be a part of the most industrious, as well as useful beings or agents upon the globe. And now, Madam, I have finished my extempore thoughts upon a subject, that I well know is so important, though disgusting, in your chaste, sober sight, and though, perhaps, I may have succeeded better in this vindication, than either you wish or I desire, believe me, it will be no encouragement of your humble servant to exhibit himself to you again in the style and character he shewed off in a few hours ago, as I believe your friendship for me, besides other considerations, would make it painful to you. Such goodness of heart and humanity of feelings as your's, would therefore
 increase

increase the crime, as well as cruelty,
tenfold, was it ever to be repeated by
your Ladyship's

Very sincere friend, &c.

BL——R.

E 4

LET-

LETTER XVII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

June 10, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,

THE effusions of fancy, or, in other words, that burst of the soul which pants with sympathetic oppression to tell all it wishes to do, that can tend either to the profit or entertainment of such a sensible friend as yourself, prompts me at this moment to comply with your desire of pelting you with a new edition of my nonsense. To effect the first, would be the greatest gratification I could possess; but for the latter, I have
long

long since sung a *requiem* to my poor manuscripts : however, blame yourself, dear Madam, for your rashness, and all its woeful train of consequences attendant. You do not consider the distress you put me under to conceive, contrive, frame, or model a subject fit to become a proper offering at the shrine of your extreme sensibility and judgement — what therefore am I to do? My feelings too convincingly tell me, that, reptile like, I must creep where you would soar, and by way of proving the fact of a communication between spirits celestial and mere earthly mortals, I will aim at making the two intelligible to each other—in earthly language, then, I tell you, that your friendly converse with Mrs. Bl—r, the other evening, cheered, nay, delighted her, as it always

ways does : the knowing that, cheered and delighted me ; for be it known, sweet Madam, there is no joy, no grief, no any thing possible to dismay, enliven, gratify, or rejoice the one, that the other does not partake of its poignancy equally.—But now for a short history of myself since we had last the pleasure to see you. I confess to you, my good confessefs, that I have felt less anxiety, thought less, reasoned more, and vanquished enemies, till I have almost turned them into friends : in short, after a long beginning, I have done some good, on this good day, and am happy to assure you, that my interference has been the active instrument in saving character on one side, and fretful anxiety, with its accompanymments, on the other, and I hope such a mediation has

esta-

established a lasting peace between the parties.——Now do I see you yawn over this copious detail of dulness ; but as you was so very peremptory, I was resolved to be as much so, therefore accept my best wishes for your relief, by desiring you will not forget to give us your usual agreeable olio soon. Mrs. Bl—r sits by me while I am scribbling ; and the deuce take me if I can tell you which of us esteem you most, we both so heartily unite in wishing every blessing to attend you.——My birds are so unusually cheerful at this moment, that I can almost fancy they are applauding my present dedication to you, by a spirit of intuition ; and who can argue against such a supposition ? — Charming Pope said enough to build such a
 con-

conjecture upon, in the following couplet :

“ Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
“ A hero perish, or a sparrow fall.”

Adieu, for this time.

BL—R,

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. BL——R to A——S——, *Esq.*

June 30, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH my friend tells me he has been unwell, I yet hope, from the jocularity of his own peculiar style of writing, that little more than the surface was affected. I am not pleased with you, by the bye, for your hurry to send the money: I must now be obliged to take it as a denial of all future admissions to D——r house, for it was there I meant to receive it. What I wanted so much was the planting receipt,

cept, to oblige Mr. W—— with ; for though he could not use it this year, I yet chose to send it to him, to shew I did not forget him. If I have a merit, (low be it spoken) it lays in a nervous anxiety to reduce promises to acts.— Thus you see I do not live within the smell of a court, and thank Jupiter for it ! though if I did, I will flatter myself I could defy its taint—but before I add another word, I must here inform you of what you overpaid me. The tumbling, equestrian brothers are both very well recovered again ; and, as they saved their necks this time, I believe they are truly sensible that prudence, if not politeness, will ever dictate a necessity for giving the road, in future, to every jack-ass, cow, calf, goat, or other animal with four legs, that may chance
to

to come across them hereafter. I get as many tumbles as most beings, but never your mischievous ones, like your men that fly from the tops of hills and churches, &c. I always arrive safe and sound at my journey's end, to the benefit of my bones.—You very kindly ask me to see you this summer, and so to trip it to C—— together; I should like it much; and to pat the agreeable door of dear B—— again, would be an acquisition to my natural stock of pleasing ideas at this moment: but what to say to that, at present, “puzzles the will.” View my present situation; I am promised to several, and worse than most bankrupts, who generally pay something, my dividend will turn out nothing—Macheath between his two doxies, was not more per-

perplexed. Dear Counsel, learned in law, tell me what I must do in the matter? else I must have recourse to a dumb female Sybil, now in this place, to decide for me at last. Still, perhaps, we may, somehow or other, contrive to meet, and laugh over a detail of some late adventures, more variegated than the most chequered Mosaic pavement your honour ever trod or speculated upon, since you conversed with your horn book.——I really now seriously begin to think myself a piece of an odd chap, and, but that you won't flatter me, I could fancy I heard you saying, you thought me so long ago—never mind; it is too late to mend now, and, of course, I must expect to grow worse: there is modesty for you, my dear Sir!——I had a letter from a friend lately,
inform-

informing me of the very precarious state of a certain person; whenever the event happens, I shall be thankful. I would not hasten it if I could, and I will not be the hypocrite, to deny that it will give me much pleasure, though in less degree than my friends, for I purpose learning to become a little ingenious, if I can, and invent schemes of such amusement, that each hour shall stand upon the tip-toe of agreeable expectation for its fellow; and the great whole of our time be swallowed up in mutual exchanges of benevolence, and its train of endearing delights, and so slide smoothly down the hill of pleasure into the vale of peace.—This, my friend, is the mighty sum of my philosophy, I promise you; and as I preach now, intend to practise by and by—but

hold ; whilst I am travelling to this same vale, I forget you must be wishing me at the d---l, for this long trespass upon *you*. Excuse it, I pray you, this one time, and I will do it no more ; only be you as merciful as you are stout. — My muse will be quite a stranger at home. I am exceedingly glad she is well. She deserves every thing this world can give her. Don't now forget me to her, when you next write, I beg and beseech you. — Mrs. S — is always in my creed, and you are invaluable to your

Very sincere friend,

BL — R,

LET

LETTER XIX.

Mr. BL——R to J——M——D, *Esq.*

Sept. 2, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR intelligence of your acquisition of a son, I beg to congratulate you and Mrs. M—— upon. Long may he live to comfort ye both! I claim my promise of being either a godfather or a godmother, or something, and beg the favour of you to dispose of the inclosed to and amongst nurses, &c. as to your royal will and pleasure shall seem most meet. Assure yourself, I

F 2

should

I should have had infinite satisfaction in
 being present at the making the young
 Christian ; but, alas ! my wishes must
 give way to great powers at a distance,
 where I shall be drawn, though not
 quartered, at that very time. I please
 myself, however, with future hopes of
 enjoying some of that gravity and sedate-
 ness you boast of so much in your an-
 cient mansion, and more particularly
 after that most religious specimen you
 gave of Franciscan piety in P— C—'s
 monastery a few months ago. Do pre-
 sent my best wishes to the lady in the
 straw. You say, you will venture to
 trouble me with another epistle shortly ;
 take courage, I beseech you, and do so,
 if you wish to oblige me ; and if the
 Gospel comes along with it, I shall not
 reject it, but the collect I dare not
 meddle

[69],

meddle with, as I am too subject to
stomachic complaints already. Believe
me very truly

Your's,

BL—R.

F 3

LET.

LETTER XX.

Mr. BL——R to R——M——R, *Esq.*

Sept. 15, 1780.

DEAR M——R,

YOUR letter of the 26th March caught my hand (mind you now, that is the present etiquette) in due time, that is to say, the day after my arrival from sweet, delightful L——, Oh Lord! but no more of that for the present, lest thoughts rise on thoughts, and drive all business to Lucifer; so Jehu like, I whip on to your honour to acquaint you, that in the very self-same

same packet with this, H——'s consolidations will meet you. They are, literally speaking, consols, and meant to be bound together, as my bookseller informs me, who says, he does not believe the author ever means to write more on that subject; if so, you may venture to call these his omnium. You must understand, I am become very learned of late in the language of Sols and Ums, having been much amongst that tribe of very respectable, worthy gentry, vulgarly styled Jews, from whom I have reaped much benefit, contrary to the general usage in transactions between their bearded reverences and us clean-shaved hereticks. Indeed I had the compliment of the eighth day's ceremony offered me, which I

declined in the politest terms I was able, assigning the true reason, that of my being a Capuchin friar, and of course bound down always to wear the hood of the order; so with a scrape, (without ever a fiddlestick) from Josephus to Thomas, and back again, we each retired right about. And now to the promise you charge me with.—

'Tis true enough, and I plead guilty to your indictment in part, though I mean to traverse it as to the rest. And first, let me ask you, R—— M——, why you did not let T—— Bl——r know, that you could play the minore of Giardini's last movement of his sixth trio obligato in B flat most rapidly, tuneably, and timeably? It was then that I was to receive my summons, and not sooner. Secondly, (as I am in hopes
you

you have not yet conquered that fame minore, for a reason, *perhaps, not quite to my own credit to mention here*) I boldly ask you, what your noble pretensions were founded upon to ask me to B—— (incapable as I now find you) unless it was to turn me into a Tom Fiddle? In short, I intend coming to seize, plunder, burn, and destroy every thing that is not worthy of preservation, (as well within liberties as without, in that most capital *Non omittas* law phrase) and in gospel language, “at an hour when no man knoweth,” so I hope, after such fair warning, you will never sleep without gun, spado, and pistol, ready to meet such a burglarious chap as your friend. Write to me shortly, and if you can compose yourself for the occasion, send me as much

much

much rattle, as you know I like, and
you can possibly spare, without wasting
too much time, paper, pen, and ink.
Now you know how to oblige

Your's, very sincerely and truly,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Nov. 6, 1780.

DEAR MADAM,

AND now, after all my dashing, I must scold you, for giving us such a faint specimen of yourself last Sunday: it was literally a tranfient beam of funfhine informing us of the rain to come, for nothing elfe has faluted us ever fince. Do, therefore, prevent a fecond deluge, and come with your olive branch to proclaim dry weather, and fave a remnant of us, elfe my faint
and

and I, like Deucalion and Pyrrha, must be obliged to re-people this place by throwing stones, and should one of them chance to hit your Ladyship's forehead, think what a death's blow will that be to our friendly trio! Next Tuesday will shew us the great town for a few days, of which time I hope we shall enjoy a part with a friend, whose name begins with an M and ends with an E. Should this whimsical weather continue, pray put us into your next Sunday's litany, and wish us well up, either by land or water, and should the latter be our fate, prepare yourself to return with us in our barge, (the first that ever failed from N——.) We hope yourself and friends arrived safely at your journey's end that evening of great danger and risque to your watches
and

and persons. Your relation is a great favourite with Mrs. Bl—r. As to what I think of her, I shall tell nobody but herself.—The two brats are fully employed just now; the eldest in mischief, the younger up to the chin in rice milk. My saint is drinking your health, and I am concluding myself very affectionately your friend; are we not therefore a *partie quarrée* fully employed? if you think not, tell me so by return of post.

This from Sir John Dory's friend,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

Mr. BL——R to W——C——, *Esq.*

Jan. 4, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I FELT the effects of my presentiment before I had tarried six hours at N——, upon which I stole out again as I entered, like a thief, with this difference though, that my intentions had not one grain of felony in their composition, either with or without benefit of clergy ; so far in favour of my neck, you'll say. I arrived here yesterday at noon ; there's expedition for you ! and
I am

I am at this moment intrenched behind a breast-work of a friend's papers of consequence, in as rude a state as chaos—comfortable enough you must think my present situation. Had I met the letter at K——, that I found on my return to this place, I had saved a most uncomfortable ride, and might have enjoyed rural felicity at A—— for some days—but why name that place here, as it serves but to remind me of pleasures lost, and increase my misfortune by reflection? To ruminate on the lively scene just past, and to feel myself a complete *solitaire*, as I do at this instant, is to view myself another Adam kicked out of Paradise; nay, I am twice as ill off as Squire Adam the first ever was; he had his companion, his comforter, his soother, his tender Eve, to share his
mis-

misfortunes with him : but I, poor I ! have nothing save what a harsh dish of indigestible philosophy, ill cooked, and worse served up, will give me. Sad fare, this ; and harder case, when it is my fate not only to bear but suffer !—Common charity, methinks, entitles me to the prayers of all under the same roof with you ; and to be flattered with those of the Three Graces amongst them, would render me light as cork, and happy as any real saint ever found himself—(though I don't either wish or desire the prayers of Miss B——, for an old maid's piety, they say, is never registered in heaven.)——If you should increase your stay where you are, send me some lines of comfort to this dull, melancholy town, where every thing wears the face of shipwreck more than ever.

ever. Tell the Graces I have not forgot the rattles, te-totums, &c. all which shall shortly be presented in proper form; but how they will ever be able to recompense properly such an obligation, is a matter of importance only equal to themselves. And now I entreat you to make the Lord of your present mansion (with the rest of that agreeable fireside) sensible of my best wishes for, to, and about them. You always know how sincerely, Dr. C—, I am

Your's,

BL—R.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. BL——R to W—— A——, Esq.

Jan. 10, 1781,

I Present you with a new-year's gift
 in your own way, though I wish I
 could have reversed the subject, not-
 withstanding it is well executed in the
 line it stands. — Poor Johny Bull!
 Led to the stake by --- and --- with ---
 on thy back! Stuck and beat in the rear
 by — and —! Tortured by a proud Spa-
 niard and a frippery Monsieur in front;
 laughed at by a certain person that shall
 be nameless; and a fruitless memorial
 be-watered by a Mynheer! — Alack, and
 alas-

alas-a-day !—What say you to us heroes of this city and county ? Dare ye do as much, without dread of episcopal anathemas ? I much fear ye dare not. So far you will have the advantage of us in the day of plunder ; for you will come in for your share with the church, if it should not be checked by such veterans as your humble, begirt with buff belts and able fwords.—My late success against Major —, and the loss of —, (for whom I most respectfully mounted scarlet) affect me so grievously at this present indicting, that I can add no more than my best compliments to Mrs. and Miss A—. Now you see I have inked my pen, as you desired, and shall wash it clean again with my tears. Pray don't cry when you write next ; but I assure you I shall, if

you don't write soon. So, my dear friend, most sobbingly, I am

Your's,

BL——R.

P. S. Say to every one I am known to, that I exist ---- *à propos* ---- it is a moot point, what valiant Cavalier is placed at the bull's rear, though it is supposed to be a certain letter in the alphabet, that either draws his arguments *à posteriori*, or is dev'lishly belied.

L E T-

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. BL——R to the same.

March 16, 1781.

I CAN assure my friend, that although his agreeable letter came, in his phrase, breaking the ice, my sentiments towards him did not freeze; it was one of my first wishes to have his correspondence. Think, though, how I durst ask such a condescension from a *sçavoir vivre!* à *bon esprit!* a choice spirit! — Such formidable characteristics were, any of them, enough to check the ambitious

risings of such a chap as myself: but
 as you have given the overture, e'en let
 the opera begin — so have at you —
 Hang it, now, that's dev'lish bald coun-
 try lingo, by the bye, — Alas, my
 dear A——, you see too plainly, that a
 certain county and politeness are not
 synonymous terms; however, at a dead
 lift, I'll quote Mr. Grief of Griefs, and
 say, “ True, 'tis pity; and pity 'tis
 “ true.” --- Mind me now, I do not quote
 like a lawyer, either in Croke James,
 or Croke Charles, and for reasons which
 you shall guess. — But, avaunt law,
 for the present, and let us march to
 Comus's court. — Hey-day! what
 have I said? I forgot my insurmount-
 able disqualifications for either singing
 or chaunting: and Mrs. W—— wrote
 me a most formidable account of a Saint
 Cecilia,

Cecilia, but concealed the divinity of her name ; I don't say, smuggled it, because in that case you would most naturally suppose I meant, that she wrapped it up in her petticoat, which I insist upon to be contrary to all the laws of gallantry, ancient or modern, as petticoats have ever been deemed infringements upon Madam Eve's most favourite prerogative of going without them.--- Though I am not favoured with her real name, I presume her highness to be sown in honour, and, of course, she must rise in glory ; yet, mere mortal as I am, I have the vanity to believe, her saintship would condescend to be raised with a glee : but then again, the transmutation from glory to glee, though different only in a very few letters, makes a dev'lish difference in the fact.

—Mr. V---- will be with me next week ; I know his wishes to see you, and will read him your letter. Surely D— can never be dull with my friend A—— within its walls ! I please myself, however, with thinking to confute your reasoning before Christmas, say what you please to the contrary.— Let me hear from you soon, as I want to consult you in your caustical capacity. I want such a skilful pilot as yourself, to steer something so very unskilful as your humble : this is no compliment, trust me ; when I am upon business I am really and truly so --- when I am a musico, I am a Mr. V----, though, alas ! with not a tythe of his musical merit——but what signifies regretting ? --- Such as I am, pray give me, with my best respects, to Mrs.
A——,

A——, and believe me, with great sincerity,

Dear Sir,

Always your's,

BL——R.

P. S. I perfectly coincide with your comparison between winter quarters at Old Y---k and New. I dare say General —— thinks with us, notwithstanding the laurels he has already reaped, and the dazzling expectations of future honour and reward. It would have given me the greatest pleasure to have had your company here---I would have engaged to protect you from rifle-barrels and rifle-barrel men ; and that is something, let me tell you, in these sad, perilous days.—Adieu.

L E T-

LETTER XXV.

Mr. BL——R to Lady C——.

Aug. 10, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,

WAS a certain party to tell you how much he admires, as well as esteems every letter of your's, he must do it in terms, that he is at this moment perfectly unequal to. If he is to tell you how much he is mortified, that he must inevitably deprive himself of that exalted pleasure which your conversation and gaiety always inspire him with, he is equally distressed. But, alas! that he must submit to a
positive

positive necessity, is too true. It fits the more uneasy upon him, because he feels an uncommon propensity to enjoy that happiness this identical day. He is amazed, that his fair correspondent can even suspect what she expresses, if she considers herself in that amiable point of view she ought to do. This day has, literally, been a fast day to him, nor has he forgot his prayers at the same time, and flatters himself of their efficacy, by having kept him out of the line of temptation. How far his coming into a certain lady's presence might occasion wandering thoughts, he leaves her to be judge of, who, he is certain, can be no stranger to those emotions of the heart, which she is always sure of exciting: under this consideration only, had nothing else interfered

ferred to prevent him saying, how do you do? it seems to argue against conscience, the visiting her this evening at the heels of all his prayers and fasting. How far her sentiments may chime in with his, he will not venture to pronounce, though he should be happy to read them under her own hand, be they for him or against him.—You shall have the comedy to-morrow morning; it is elegant, pointed, humorous, and natural; the incidents droll, and well managed: it reads well, and must play delightfully. It has been a fund of entertainment, because it corresponds so much with the sentiments of somebody you know, who thinks your Ladyship could play the heroine to perfection. Dear Madam, adieu.

BL——R,

LET-

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. BL——R to W—— B——, *Esq.*

Nov. 12, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I BEGIN, after my usual manner, to write to you by scraps, (fragments, I cannot style them, because *they* sometimes make a volume, and I have not materials to stretch through half a one). Thank you for your operatical intelligence. I feel a musical glow at your description of D—— and R——: I look upon T—— as an irreparable loss, and for three reasons; first, on account of his comprehensive, well-ton'd tenor voice;

voice; second, for his variety of power, and third, for that happy ease in his mode of expressing both song and action;—but I must come to town and feel effects, before I pretend to judge adequately of causes; I do not know a better proof sheet than London. B— is spending this evening with me at the grievous expence of all my rum, water, lemons, &c. and has this moment poured down a copious libation to your honour's health. I hope N—— has told you before this hour of my folly in complying with his terms for the violin. I confess I am pleased with it, and fancy it makes me play all the better. It is mellow, full, and vibrates plentifully: it excites curiosity, pleases taste, and delights judgement, and all this I am told by those who call themselves

cogno-

cognoscenti. B—— purposes tripping it to the metropolis very shortly, when we shall most assuredly beat up your quarters : he joins me in every wish of friendship to you.

Adieu,

BL——a:

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. BL——R to J—— F——, Esq.

Jan. 5, 1782.

DEAR F——,

I WAS very agreeably surpris'd last post with a letter from you, and wrote too upon good English *terra firma*. How different must you feel yourself upon comparison, between where you now are, and beating amongst the angry billows of master Neptune! What, in the name of wonder, (except monstrous gains soon acquired) can tempt a man to banish himself from a sensible society, particularly

cularly heightened when the fair part of creation help to form it, and give the preference to a scene of almost perpetual tumult, where, 'tis great odds that health, if not life, falls a sacrifice on the account? You see plainly, what kind of a sailor I am. The question you ask me, I will answer with all the candour that friendship can dictate, or you wish. I will run through the three professions: the law is slavish; it requires great application indeed to attain a proper knowledge of it. To be an attorney, without you could slide into a circle of clients of rank and importance, so soon as you are legally qualified, you had better be a chimney-sweeper; the one, perhaps, saves your house when on fire; he is an useful member of society; the other too often

up and spreads flames of a different sort and far more ruinous to that part of society, who have the misfortune to come within his reach : 'tis a certain set of this sort of gentry that have drawn down such a stigma upon a profession, calculated in itself for the two noble purposes of redressing the injured man, and punishing the villain. If you are a counsel, without a lucky moment, or a man of fashion takes you by the hand, with the abilities of a Camden you may remain behind the bar for your whole life.—

As to physic, 'tis well known that physicians are more fashionable than useful, in these enlightened days, when mankind read more, and search deeper into science, than they did half a century ago ; besides, you see them swarming in almost every petty town in this kingdom.

kingdom.---Divinity, provided a gown and cassock do not appear frightful, seems to stand fair for you, but then it is to be considered, whether you can purchase the next turn of a rectory with an old incumbency, so that you can be able to pop into possession, when you are twenty-four (the soonest period that you are admissible) ; or I will suppose within two or three years afterwards. It is a genteel profession, and, with proper conduct, ranks you among the first personages of your country. Still you must ask your heart this one question, Can you conform to the little strictnesses the profession requires of you? If you cannot, for Heaven's sake never think of it ; for in my eye, an immoral priest is the greatest disgrace to human nature ; I do not

mean, that a clergymen is never to laugh and be merry, that would be a stupid character indeed. As I do not apprehend his gown to give him perfection, I would yet wish him to be doubly studious how to hide his little foibles from the public, on account of example, as well as the rendering himself always respectable amongst every rank of society.—As to the army, I prefer horse to foot; and then you are to consider, that unless there be a few young men of fashion in the corps, who grow weary of restraint in a few years, you may stick a cornet many. If you arrived at a troop in ten years, it will cost you about three thousand pounds, for which, reckoning your arrears, you make shillings a day.

Then

Then the chances of war against you, and if you should happen to grow tired, it is not always that you can get leave to fell; and if your anxiety is discovered, you are, perhaps, bartered down in price. Suppose then that some of your friends were to procure you a partnership with a banker in proportion to your three thousand pounds? Here requires no apprenticeship, no fee of course; 'tis sure gain; genteel, easy to manage, and not slavish. You might throw your money into the mercantile line; but that is so precarious, there is no pronouncing decisively on that head, and should your partner play you false, his misconduct involves you equally; for the law makes no distinction between the honest and the dishonest part-

ner; they embark in the same vessel, and must either swim or sink together. A banker has no seas to cross; he is always on the right side; his commodity is money; it is standard in every market.—Upon the whole, I balance myself between the banker and the parson, and was it my affair, I would make my option from one of them. I do not say this to bias your judgement, I give it only as matter of opinion. Before I conclude this very tedious detail, I must ask your excuse for trespassing a little further, by desiring you will do me the favour to present my compliments to Mrs. F——, with thanks for her very polite letter, which I preserve as a testimony of those elegant abilities that do such great honour to her sex.—It is quite uncertain, whether I may be at
N——

N—— this year, or not ; this hangs
upon the thread of an accident, that I
cannot determine upon at this hour.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's faithfully,

BL——R.

H 4 LET.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss S——E.

March 10, 1782.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE often been told, that one of the most horrid things in life was an empty purse ; but you have enabled me to confute that opinion, from the pleasure you gave me in that which you was so kind to send me the other day. Indeed I should not have thought the worse of it, had it come full of the pictures of his present Majesty, though that would not have made me value
your

your performance the more, as I assure you, I equally esteem the gift. Could I fill it to my own satisfaction, it should contain the sum of both our desires, and I would thank you for it, did I not know it would offend you. I am glad your day of return was so pleasant to you; it would in some degree recompense you for the loss of your fair friend. You enjoy the luxury just now of good air and green fields, in exchange for smoke and dullness, for the diversions here cannot live beyond the week; (though you will perhaps ask me, what has a hermit to do with the world or the world's affairs?) Believe me,

Very truly your's,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. BL——R to Major B——Y.

Oct. 1, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

IT is not necessary, I suppose, to tell you, that I always esteem a letter of your's ; and though, perhaps, not so much so as I ought, I can yet assure you, my inclinations are as great as my powers : and the best you know can but go as far. I was extremely pleased to read in public your late promotion to a majority. I do not congratulate you upon it, but your regiment, whom I have no doubt,

doubt, without a compliment, have rejoiced often and again at the event ere this. Trust me, I had not been silent all this while, but from an idea, in some parts of this kingdom, that all letters indiscriminately, except from Government, were opened, for fear of dangerous intelligence; besides, you was a fluctuating body, and I, ignorant how to direct to you with certainty.—You ask me for news—First, be it known that your friend S—— has sold as much of his estate as clears him of his incumbrances, to the amount of forty thousand pounds, and leaves him his mansion, with a handsome revenue to support it. There is the good effect of ancestors making purchases two centuries ago. — N--- D--- has quitted Peterburgh

burgh for the more hospitable climate of the English metropolis. — As to this place, it improves much in balls, routes, riots, &c. but in manners just as it ever has been. For myself, I don't vegetate half so much as I used to do ; that is, I don't eat celery in half that abundance I did, when you dressed it so elegantly for me. — Pray do contrive, somehow or other, to make a finish of this nasty dispute ; and I particularly insist, that you contrive to be of the number of the chosen few, to tell the story hereafter, and “ stand a tip-toe “ when that day is named.” — I must now inform you, that I have been as much of a wanderer as an Arab, though not so wild, for I have scampered half over the kingdom since I spent the last agreeable evening with you. —

Shall

Shall I ask you, if at the close of e'er a campaign you have yet taken an additional rib to your old set?— They tell me, the ladies of the country you are in are lovely, amorous, and rich, (three excellent ingredients in the pharmacopeia of matrimony)— *à propos* — I believe your friend Sir J—— G—— is going to take to himself a wife, and of considerable fortune. I spent much of my time with the Baronet last winter in town : he is most convivial, and, very *unfashionably*, retains remembrance of the man he esteems, be the distance of place ever so great.— You have English newspapers, so I retail no English news here. You say, you desire me to consider you with consideration, and the respect due to a horse officer. That I will

will not do, unless I add as much more
to the sum as I know you deserve, but,
above all, my unalterable attachment as
a friend, while I have the pleasure to
remain on this side the Styx.

I am always,

Dear Sir,

Your's,

BL—R,

LET-

LETTER XXX.

Mr. BL——R to C——W——, Esq.

Jan. 15, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

ASSURE yourself nothing could have given me greater pleasure, than meeting you where you now are, independent of other inducements ; but be doubly certain of my good wishes for your speedy accomplishing the end of your present pursuit ; but being disappointed of the packet I told you of, was obliged to write again yesterday, which inevitably chains me to this dull place

place for the present. However, as the moments of expectation to a person in your condition must drag miserably slow, I take the earliest occasion to substitute my personal attendance, by inclosing my letter to Mr. B—, which if you approve, you will seal and deliver it, and I will engage for his friendly exertions on your behalf. I send my servant *exprès*, as letters too often hang between the post-offices of K— and H—. May success attend the interview! I shall be glad to hear you say, “She let concealment feed on her damask cheek.” *Eh bien, Monsieur!* — Now do I think I see you ready to expire, so adieu,

Mon cher ami,

BL—R.

LET.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. BL—R to W—C—R—R, Esq.

Sept. 7, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I AM at a worthy friend's house, with a sporting party, on our way to the moors, where I met your most obliging letter, amongst others forwarded to me hither. I receive your congratulations with a sincere pleasure. Those genuine marks of respect are every whit as agreeable to me as the subject that occasions them, (my first wishes having always been to render others happy, when I could, from those inward con-

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victions

victions that money never created, much less added to). Though you too truly say, you live out of the line of my northern excursions, you are not out of the line of my thoughts, and depend on my making a 90 miles trip across to you in October, if that will convince you. Let me hear what you and the rest of the musical amateurs are about; though I boast no higher than what the pretensions of an illegitimate son of Apollo ought to aspire to, I yet reverence the lyre as reverentially as the most legitimate son of them all.

Dear Sir,

You ever command your's,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. BL——R to W——A——, *Esq.*

March 16, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I Scarcely know what to say to your
worship, except in the plain old
English inditing of, “ I hope these few
lines will find you well,” &c. that is,
as well steeped as myself in the finest
flower-begetting rain that ever fell in
spring ; I have not a dry thread upon
me ; but the recollection of Pope’s ele-
gant lines, beginning “ In that soft sea-
son,” made quite a philosopher of me
in my long peregrination : but from

flowers let me pass to Sapphic epistles, and town eclogues; they will surprise you, if they won't please: the caricatures will be a treat for your brother aldermen at one of your corporation feasts. But to complete your entertainment, after perhaps having tickled your worship's eyes and imagination with the liberty of the press, I present you with something better than a straw to tickle your nose with, (if good rappee will do it) and having said all this, and having no more to say, because I am arrived at the but-end of all my present sayings, let me assure you how much

I am your's,

BL——R.

L E T-

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. BL——R to A—— S——, Esq.

Nov. 6, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

AS I have vanity enough to fancy your agreeable fireside interested by good inclination to know what good or evil genius may have attended upon me, since my death and burial last Thursday, know that I am risen again, and once more corporeally exist, though surrounded by atmospherical darkness and dullness combined. Sad reverse to A——, whose very mountains, in spite of their present wintry garb, look gay,

I 3

if

if compared with the spot which occupies your humble at this present moment. I could be cynical, but then I should snarl. I will turn philosopher all at once, and say, All is for the best —'tis comfortable as well as right, to think so, and there it ends—I was more of the drabbled d---l from T—— to this place the day after leaving you, than when I exhibited at your mansion, that perishing evening from S——. Indeed this latter business was all pure rain, so that I was less chilled, and had my pulse been felt by the hand of delicacy, I might possibly have appeared to possess animation enough to alarm even those chaste ideas of your cook, when she assisted in pulling off my wet boots on that never to be forgotten snowy Friday night—To-morrow I set off post
for

for N—— again, with a gentleman much distressed by the ill usage of his brother ; he intreats my assistance ; his unhappiness is much aggravated by all the ingratitude in the world, in return for a most exemplary open, honest confidence : he vows he cannot act for himself ; I am therefore to take the office upon me ; it is abominably inconvenient at this juncture, but I must do it : the close connection (intimate as I am with both) lays hold of me in spite of every consideration, and tincture but the dose with humanity, every idea to prevent my going dies. Good God ! are the thorns and briars already scattered in our path too few, that we must study how to increase their number ? Wretched mortal man ! how little hast thou to pride thyself upon, if thou con-

sidereth what human nature is compounded of ! My life in this place (as I told you often) is made up of the speculative and contemplative—We have nothing here but creation's dregs ; we neither hear, see, touch, or taste, like some that you and I know ; I therefore content myself for the present, well assured that the scene must shift presently——Pleas'd when I can pour my healing drop into the wound of an unfortunate party, and when occasions do not present themselves, happy in being conscious I am ready if they should ; but this is moralizing, which some people in the world would term dullness. If any thing can apologize for it, the day must, (good Sunday) but I do not believe you will think it so. Let me hear of you soon, for this kind of converse is
the

the brightest blaze of friendship at a distance.—Adieu—You are always sure of my sincerity, let the ingrate's abode be wherever it may.

BL—R.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. BL——R to C——W——s, *Esq.*

Jan. 2, 1784.

DEAR C——,

IT gave me real concern to read out of the mouth of your last letter, your despair of success in your embassy. Let me give you my opinion with the candour of a friend. You really torment yourself when you need not; for, as all the avenues of your introduction seem to be shut, (and, as to Mr. B——, I am all astonishment, from my knowledge of his intimacy with the family,) I certainly should not hesitate upon
waiting

waiting on the principal, who I will answer for giving you a polite reception, and an interview being all you want, never stand upon punctilious terms for obtaining it; a refusal can be no death's wound; and let me tell you, that every real gentleman, of unquestionable character, can do no dishonour to the lady he may propose to, especially in this age, where there is so little marrying, or giving in marriage. I fear, my friend, you are too delicate, and expect advances where you ought to make them. I am clear that the father neither expects nor thinks of parade for his daughters, though he might naturally wish it. Can any sensible man doubt, between a gentleman in your line of life, possessed of your connections, and a *militaire* with ten shillings

lings a day, and a cockade? And yet the latter would, perhaps, think he honoured the sister of a peer with his pretensions. — These ladies are educated with prudence—that idea includes consideration, reflection, &c. and with good sense must equally involve those happy notions of friendship, which raise certain females so transcendently above the rest of their sex. You do not want a butter-fly, a jointed baby, a pantin in petticoats — no; you want an amiable companion, a friend, and that in the shape of a woman, whose person will please you, and whose temper, vivacity, and conversation, will be an eternal feast to you. Such, if report deserves credit, is the delectable Miss C——; I sincerely wish it was in my power to join your hands together. — Your saying,

ing,

ing, you stay but four or five days longer where you are, makes me send you this *express* by my servant. He will stay all night at H——, so that I could wish to know how far this sermon of mine meets your own sentiments ; at the same time hint, why you apprehend B——'s introduction would have prejudiced your hopes.—— Inclosed, is the song you desire, in English. I could not procure it in French, else had sent it, also. It is naked, as Nature made it. I could have pencilled between the notes the little nonsense of my own, in the way I play it, but that would have smelt too strong of pedantry. —— What a most happy mortal are you, to be surrounded with those enchanting Syrens ! It is well worth a man's journey to the world's

world's end, indeed, to make one of so agreeable a circle : but I must remain a philosopher some little while longer, before I emerge — so adieu, my dear friend, for the present.

BL—Ra

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. BL——R to Mrs. F——.

July 30, 1784.

MADAM,

AS I now see it will not be in my power to visit B— as I intended, I am just set down to answer your obliging favour of last week. I rejoice at the fortunate event befallen your son ; but as no pecuniary advantage will accrue till he is of age, I think you judge very properly, in sequestering him for that interval at a private academy. I am entirely against all country schools whatever for gentlemen. The best of them
all

all must allow of great intermixtures ; the sons of the first order, with the sons of the lowest. I knew a school of that description ; every dirty vice, down to theft, was practised : the ordinary boys brought the infection to the school, and the rest of the forms, in a greater or smaller degree, received some part of the taint of bad example. The great argument generally used in favour of a public school is, its preventing a narrow, limited way of thinking in life, which private schools are said too often to give. An academy of my description does not come within the meaning of a private school : it is very properly called an academy, from its being select—it is a university in miniature—that includes every idea of mine. A country school would be the martyrdom of
your

your son's elegant talents. An academy near London takes the lead with me; and were there no other superior inducements, that one of a polite accent is of great consequence. Fear not the difference of expence: the recompence to your son, in life, will be an ample reward. I am so firm in this opinion, that could I not give a son above five hundred pounds, it should all go in his education, if required; and let him start in the world with good connections early formed; they will do him far more service than the interest of five thousand pounds spent in obscurity ever can do. I am speaking of a sensible, enterprizing young man—a blockhead is fit for no better place than his own fireside—a blockhead will be such every where. As to the objection,

that London and its neighbourhood is a scene of temptation to a young man, every town in the kingdom is such in a degree : that weighs nothing with me, if a young man professes not dissipation. All I can or will say on that subject is, that I should prefer the hearing of his politer intrigues with a gentlewoman, to any vulgar attachment to a cook wench, let her beauty be what it may.

—— The freedom of these strictures would have been spared, had I not known your good sense too well, to doubt of their being received as they are intended.——Wishing every success to attend your son, I beg leave to assure yourself of my most perfect esteem.

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. BL——R to Mrs. J——N.

Jan. 20, 1785.

DEAR MADAM,

HAVING taken cold by going abroad yesterday, I feel myself too unwell to stir from home to-day, else should most certainly have paid my devoirs to you; at the same time it was my intention to have presented you with the inclosed. Such a trifle is scarcely worth your acceptance, only that it is all the present taste and fashion: but I am certain it must possess an intrinsic worth in your opinion, when I tell you

K 2

that

that it is the Duchess of Devonshire's
taste. Do me therefore the favour to
accept it, if you wish to confer an obli-
gation on your most devoted

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. BL——R to A——S——, *Esq.*

May 19, 1785.

I BEGAN to fancy my friend was dead, not reading a syllable from him since my duplicate scribbles to him, and more particularly, as one of them requested a copy of the receipt about —— from him. If you received them in the other world, let me know it, as I very much suspect it to be the case, being very well assured, that nothing but the usual delays in passing the Styx could ever have interrupted your usual punctuality. If you can furnish your

answer with some of those agreeable intelligences that a certain Swedish philosopher used to speak of, and wrote such a vast deal about, the more will you be relished by such an inquisitive mortal as your humble.—Mrs. S— I hope is well.—I make no inquiries after Madam Flora ; she is gone, I hear, to her sensible friend, Mrs. P——, that pattern of conjugal virtue, and great ornament of her sex. I sincerely wish the report of her succeeding to her uncle's fortune may be well founded.—The family at D—— are all well, except the old lady, whose over-delicate constitution reminds her too frequently that she is not *immortal* ; I hope, however, if only for the sake of the good folks about her, she may continue some years longer in the land of the living.

—Our

— Our friend F— was yesterday presented with a charming girl, though had it been a boy, I have some small notion the present had been more welcome.—What weak mortals we are ! Never to be contented ! — What did Chancellor More's lady wish for, but a boy instead of a girl ? She had her wish ; and what was the fruit of her desire ? Sir Thomas told her ; a boy for life.—There is no need of an application to either A---- S---- or M----, F----

Adieu,

BL——R.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. BL——R to R—— M——, *Esq.*

Nov. 21, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

WHAT a queer chap must you be
to write to such a queer chap as
your humble! Lord bless us! and after
so many months consideration too!
however, without three minutes pause,
I am resolved to tell you how glad I
was to receive a scribble from you:
note that, my good friend. First then,
I must insist on your telling Mrs. M——,
that if she was the wife of any other
man but yourself, I should love her;

as

as Mrs. M—— I must ever esteem her for your sake. Secondly, (for you see I go on in the chapter and verse way) I shall be more than happy, if that can be, to see you at my mansion in town, whensoever you may be disposed to visit the metropolis after next Thursday, the day I start. Thirdly, (chapter and verse again) you tell me you was actually teased into the shewing my little moral essay to a certain quondam acquaintance of mine; that idea turned me womanish for a few seconds, as it brought ten thousand pleasing reflections to my remembrance, and my heart does more than echo to my pen as I write. I wish she knew how much I wish her happy; but what right have fiddlers to wish for any thing but clear catgut, without knots? That thought
 though,

though, slides me into an answer to your question of, How goes on music with us? Believe me, it drags miserably; *sans* taste, *sans* hands, *sans* audience, and the want of encouragement is the worst *sans* of all. I (thank Jupiter by the bye) am going to enjoy it in perfection; that is selfish, you will say, and I would allow you to say so, if I did not know your feelings too well, not to allow music, like a mistress, to be fair smuggling, and more particularly so, when there is never an act of parliament of them all, that can touch one hair of Madam Cecilia's head. As you are pleased to express a wish of repeating your scribbles to such a sort of party as myself, I beg leave to assure you, that nothing will give me greater pleasure, than the reading those wishes,

which

which you may depend on being as faithfully answered; and as that unaccountable something of matter has so ordered and directed itself to thrust you and I two hundred miles asunder, there is one method to shorten the distance, by communicating the effusions of our uppermost thoughts, *alias* fancies, through that agreeable channel of a sheet of writing paper, and so keep alive the embers of regard in the painful moments of absence.

I am ever your's,

BL—R.

P. S.

P. S. Your animadversions entertained me exceedingly; they were composed of the Attic and Epigrammatic agreeably seasoned and well served up to table.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Jan. 13, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

I HOPE my giving myself the pleasure of presenting you with the hare skin that accompanies this scribble, will put you under neither of the two awkward predicaments of poacher, or unlicensed person to kill game, much less would I have you think it sent to make game of you. The salutary end of it I only desire to keep pace with my wishes, you then will very soon recover your health again. Faith, it is said,

works

works wonders ; but I am more confident of the benefits of my recipe than the most pious catholick can be in the efficacy of his beads, though never so reverentially consecrated ; for I will take perseverance against all the crossings and *Ave-Maria's* in Christendom. The little bottle (of the party too) I recommend its use in the manner I informed you ; and you know where more is to be had, if wanted. Mrs. Bl——r joins me in her sincerest wishes, and bids me tell you, that if you really are the unceremonious friend, you will prove it by your frequent appearances in our parlour, where, assure yourself, few can be so welcome, and none more so.

Adieu, dear Madam,

BL——R.

L E T-

LETTER XL.

Mr. BL——R to A—— S——, Esq.

April 3, 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

I AM sit down with my boots on to thank you for your last entertaining account, which made me exert my risible muscles no little, I assure you: it contains much food for many agreeable *tête-à-têtes* at my return to you.— I tell you I am sitting with my boots on, because I mean to say, that I am going to visit a most agreeable family twenty miles off this place, there to remain

remain till Sunday morning, then return hither again to dine with a charming widow, who is all the mercury of Nature from top to toe. Monday is fixed for a meeting of smarts at a great gala in this town. D—— will contain me on the Tuesday and Wednesday; and on Thursday I begin my march of marches towards C——; so you see how I have laid myself out before I am dead. This day went my music case, directed for your worship; you are now certain I shall not be long from you, when such heralds proclaim my coming. I am doubly concerned at your loss of the fair nymph, on account of her dear sister friend; but I consider it is now doubly incumbent on me to amuse the pining Delia all I can; and pray tell her how happy I shall be to
change

change her sighs into smiles, if not into absolute laughter. What the deuce had Sir Thomas F—— to do at S——s at such a juncture? I want to know. At least the H——s might have kept away, and then our little friend had remained still in view of that stupendous, as well as romantic eminence at R—— T——. An endemical cold has lately shewn great numbers of the inhabitants here “the way to dusky death;” it has, literally, been a plague, though, luckily, not of the Turkish sort; I had it, but a severe frosty season now setting in upon us will, I hope, give us all good air, and good health along with it. I hope the ladies and yourself have escaped that infection, and every other.--- My good wishes, I beg may never escape

Vol. I. L ye

ye all, whilst I remain upon this petit
globe.——

Adieu,

Dear Sir,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XLI.

Mr. BL—R to Miss B—R.

March 12, 1786.

MADAM,

MY friend W— has this day shewn me such a specimen of taste and sentiment as, I am morally assured, can only be equalled by yourself. I most ardently long for his happiness to arrive soon, because I very selfishly consider, I then stand a chance for a personal knowledge of a lady who does so much honour to her sex: I wish it was in my power to flatter you, I should then boast of abilities I never yet found myself master of, especially if I consider

L 2

whom

whom I am now addressing. 'Tis a high degree of enthusiasm (of your own creation by the bye) that makes me take this liberty; I will not beg pardon for it, because W—— says he will undertake to appease you. If I should have the misfortune to offend you, depend upon it, that my own silent reproach will be a ten times greater punishment than the frankest confession I could ever make you. Though I expect to be out of the pale of your pity, I yet think I may be fortunate enough to meet your forgiveness, and I will presume upon it, because I fancy I read your very soul out of the spirit of your letters. That Heaven may give you the completion of all your desires soon, is the prayer of a very sincere wisher unknown.

LET-

LETTER XLII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss P——.

June 1, 1786.

MADAM,

YOUR elegant purse arrived yesterday, for which I feel myself exceedingly obliged to you, and though it has given me all the vanity of a birthday suit, I shall wear it with all that kind of calm pleasure I am certain the donor wishes me to do: I only fear it may spoil me, as such temptations are not safe in every hand. Little did I think to have lived to become *purse-proud*! nay more, to boast of it too!

L 3

there-

therefore, confider what a monftrous deal you have to answer for by making me fo.—This is certainly the moft slender meeting ever remembered ; dullnefs pervades every fpot about it.—Higher heads and larger buckles than ever are the fashionable rage of this af- femblage. There has been no *ton* for months paft in town. All rage, and nothing elfe, fo that you muft fall into one as faft as you can. For my own part, I have got the ftart of you, and am outrageous already ; but for all that, I fhall never forget how much I am obliged to you, being at all times,

Madam,

Your moft obedient,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. BL——R to J—— B——, *Esq.*

June 18, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I AM infinitely obliged to you for your great readiness to answer my last epistle, which I am sorry to say, like the rest of my correspondence, is always to give you some troublesome commission or other: so fares it now. As it will suit me better to come to town in August than July, on the score of some matters that will as well, if not better, suit Mrs. Bl——r, I wish to know the latest period for doing my

business ; that is, whether I must come up *instantly*, or I may take my time till next Christmas, if I so please.—Now don't you think this question wonderfully like Tristram's long pages, to tell you in two words, that his mother was to have a settlement ?——When are we to have the pleasure of seeing you ? Do take the choice of a good Sunday, as that may possibly best suit you, first announcing your intentions, that we may not be from home, for you must understand we generally drive about the country on some part of that day, and that is my reason for anticipation. — Come, I say, and see rural peace, and its companion, inoffensive simplicity.— No tinsel, no shew, no money changers, dwell here, therefore no dread of being flogged out of the Temple. We
 breathe

breathe pure air, enjoy splendid sunshine, and are grateful to Madam Luna, when she presents us with the sight of her face in an evening ; the birds sing to us ; the cattle bellow ; the sheep bleat ; the lambs cry and play in turn ; in short, it is one entire concert of nature : do therefore come and bear witness to it all.—I am hard at work for the press, though I hope and pray not to be squeezed to death : I have not yet deserved the *peine forte & dure*, whatever I may.—We are all hearty and stout, *Dieu merci !* and Mrs. Bl—r, in particular, desires to add her respects along with,

Dear Sir,

Your's most truly,

BL—R.

L E T.

LETTER XLIV.

Mr. BL——R to Miss ——.

Aug. 16, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR letter of this morning alarmed me exceedingly. I thought our last interview had sufficiently reconciled certain doubts, that to a sensible mind, such as your's, ought never to have recurred : but as I now see how capable that undefinable part of the human system, called nerves, is to derange the very best of mortals, particularly when aided by what Shakespeare long ago called *skyey* influence, I shall not wonder,

der, in future, if the *real* faint of this day should fancy himself a *miserable sinner* to-morrow.—Those reflections threw me into a train of thinking, and those thoughts I here transmit for your Ladyship's perusal : if they offend, it is not intended ; should they absolutely disgust, the fire can very easily annihilate them.

I am

Your most obedient,

BL——R.

Some

*Some select Thoughts, very proper to be
attended to by any Person in a despond-
ing State of Mind.*

1st. TO consider that fundamental,
invariable rule, that the Almighty has
made nothing in vain.

2^d. That his wisdom and goodness
delight in bestowing happiness on his
creatures.

3^d. That whatever accident or dis-
appointment befalls any individual, it is
with God's own permission, and to an-
swer some wise, good end ; and be as-
sured, that he always recompenses the
suffering

suffering party, and generally in this life.

4th. It would be inconsistent with divine Wisdom, to suppose it could delight in being cruel ; and whoever reads the New Testament with proper attention, will see it filled with the noblest of sentiments — charity, mercy, kindness, and benevolence.

5th. Can it be supposed, in common sense, that the Almighty would recommend laws to frail mortals, that he would not put in practice himself ?

6th. To despair is to doubt, and must give high offence to Providence, as it supposes that he receives pleasure at the punishment of one of his own creation.

creation. It is an impiety of too gross a nature, after the attributes of heaven are so well understood.

7th. Despair destroys not only health and happiness, but shortens life itself. To do the last is an act of suicide ; and how that must appear in the eye of Omnipotence, I leave to the party's self to judge.

8th. A firm, calm, resigned obedience to the will of our Maker, will conquer any difficulty, and a little perseverance will restore the mind to itself again ; and be assured of one never-erring truth, that the Almighty will not let such resignation fall short of its proper reward.

9th.

9th. To think otherwise would be to make God no better than a devil, and overturn the whole system of that blessed religion, which has stood the attacks of the enemies of Christianity for almost thousands of years past.

N. B. To the above rules observe another, which is, to amuse the mind all you can ; and whenever the *one* disagreeable subject recurs to your memory, resolve to forget it, by either reading some pleasant book, or going into fresh air and cheerful company.

Oh gloom ! thou dire companion of woe,
To beauty, goodness, tenderness, a foe,
What havock dost thou make in ev'ry breast
That, weakly, suffers thee to build a nest !
To hatch destruction for the human soul,
Who suffers thy corrode without controul--

Save

Save me, some guardian angel, from thy pow'r,
 And dispossess me in one single hour :
 Lead me, oh ! lead me to some earthly pleasure,
 The mind's recruit, the spirit's certain treasure,
 Then shall I dance, and sing, and talk away
 Night's dullness, and salute the brilliant day.

LET-

LETTER XLV.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——E.

Aug. 7, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

WHY will you continue to torment me with expectations of impossibilities? You say, again and again, you will have my ideas of Simplicity as a character, but still more unreasonable, you ask for an outline of her Ladyship as I would wish to see her upon canvas—You distress me so much, that in pure revenge I will (for the first and last time) expose my ignorance, and leave it to the world to say who is in

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M

fault,

fault, you or I; I must therefore lay
the consequence at your door, as I am
afraid of it, from a knowledge of my
being so slender a judge of painting.

Dear Madam,

Ever your's,

BL——R.

Ideas

Ideas of Simplicity, as a character.

SHE should be the loveliest child of fancy, taught by Nature's self to breathe her genuine thoughts—Possessing the heart of a hermit, I would have her disdain the wealth of art, with all its gaudy trappings, pageant weeds, and sweeping trains; in their stead, I would wish to see her step forth the decent, meek-eyed maid, arrayed in Attic robes. —Such immaculate emblems reflecting such divine lustre upon the charms of that daughter of mortality (happy enough to be the wearer of them) would bespeak her the saint, before she took her flight to her own celestial mansion.

The Outlines of Simplicity, for a Picture.

LET her be coming from a village, (represented on the back ground with its proper appendages) and appear to be viewing Nature before her. Her countenance to express a mixture of timidity and surprise, from her being alone. The distant objects she is supposed to look forwards to, should be displayed in a rich, well-variegated landscape in perspective: then let a Cupid appear, beholding Simplicity with an uncommon degree of astonishment, so as to occasion his breaking his arrow, and in a supplicating, half-bending attitude offering her the blunt end
of

of it, at some distance, indicating his wish to deliver it into her hand, but being too much awed by her presence, dares not---the time of day to be morning---a moderate sunshine---a clear sky---much silver cloud, and the colour of the sky to be a very pale blue, except in those places where it receives the sun's rays---

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——.

Aug. 19, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE just time enough to spare to give you galloping thanks for your obliging inquiries this morning, and to tell you, we are all sound and stout, in spite of what rain may have befallen us, though I won't deny, that some abatement of the kindly dews of Heaven would have made us more earthly happy. My silence was owing to a daily expectation of a summons to L—— for some time past; however you are cer-
tain

tain to see us next week. I am sincerely sorry for your finger. What a most wretched condition for you to have been in, and so deranged too as not to have been able either to write or read! I trust and hope those hours of unhappy sensation have flown from you before this. We are going to spend this afternoon with a curious well-bred bachelor—formal as the curls of a doctor's wig too: I wish you was with us to partake of the drollery of it. Mrs. Bl—r says, it will afford us all the varieties of a giblet pye, and then you know we must be entertained from *head* to *foot*. Before I can give you a proper opinion of the studies for the young lady you speak of, I should know the natural bent of her genius and taste, else I might recommend the very books she might

pore over, but never improve from: set me down to Coke upon Lyttleton, and a better dose of the squills no apothecary in Europe could administer to me. 'Tis for you to apply. And now I must give you the state of some of us for two or three days past. Your humble has been seized in his limbs, but cured himself; L—— made herself ill with cucumbers, but is coming to her appetite again; and I *am* come to the end of my scribble, after assuring you, that you always will possess the sincerest regard of

Your

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——,

Aug. 29, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

I NOW sit down to tell you how disappointed we were at not seeing you on Sunday, though we hope no untoward accident deprived us of that pleasure. I am happy to inform you, that Mrs. BL——r is quite restored again; eats well, sleeps well, and will get fatter (by 13 degrees, I expect) in the course of a very little time to come.—Last week was such an alarm to me, that I wish not to remember it: I flew
to

to B——, got intelligence of a most able medical man, who, by the aids of sensible, gentle applications, (no physical crammings) soon rendered her state easy and happy again. I am writing with my dining-room window open, listening to the pretty warblers of the grove one minute ; viewing my shrubbery another ; reckoning fast upon my peaches, nectarines, and apricots ripening in a few days, on a third ; and so gliding through every minute of the hour, with expectation rising on expectation, a wish, a something that cheers the mind with the dawnings of what is to be accomplished by and by. We go in the morning to the lake, to be amused with the diversions of the spear and drag-net, and only shall regret your not being of the party ; though I hope
you

you will shortly fix the day for our seeing you. The children are well; in short, we are all well, as we wish this to find you. Mrs. Bl——r unites with me very sincerely and truly in our regards for you. So, dear Madam, adieu, from

Your's,

BL——R.

L E T-

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. BL——R to Miss M——.

Sept. 9, 1786.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR most kind inquiry after us
met us both invalidish, though,
Dieu merci! we can, on this good day,
boast of being so well again, as to tell
you so with pleasure. Our joint prayers
for rain have been heard in part; but
we must encore it again and again be-
fore we receive our quota necessary to
soften earth, loosen weeds, make pota-
toes grow, and insects quit their fa-
vourite

yourite haunts of peaches, nectarines,
 plums, cherries, &c. &c. In short, we
 are far less blighted, less *be*-infected,
 than our neighbours, and without one
 grain of ill-tempered triumph, we are
 thankful. Why did you not send us a
 drop of the oil of your saint to polish
 our country rust with? *You* won't al-
 low of such a thing as rust, because
 you are a stranger to it, like a friend
 of mine, that would not believe it pos-
 sible for the distance of twenty or thirty
 miles from the metropolis, to affect ei-
 ther constitution or manners, till he
 found himself both invalid and rustic—
 I wrote to our good friend, in answer
 to her letter of kindness, which I shall
 ever feel a due sense of. Pray, in cha-
 rity, send us some news to vary the
 scene of village dogs barking, cocks
 crowing,

crowing, and robins chirping, which, though all three are agreeable enough in their turn, yet may occasion the concert's having too many acts.

Your's,

Dear Madam,

BL——R.

LET.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. BL——R to A—— S——, Esq.

Jan. 31, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

A S C—— T—— is not yet arrived to furnish me with a cover to enclose the papers I wished to have sent for your perusal in a former letter, I must reserve them to deliver to you in person. A letter of expostulation, or rather reproof, (and sorry I am to be obliged to use so harsh a term) to Mrs. C——, caused her to desire an interview, and, though unwell, I went down, when the papers wanted were given

given up — things so extorted, come with an ill grace at the best ; and when persons recollect themselves so very late, it is, in my mind, much like to a repenting in the grave. My friendship, I candidly own, reels yet : but when I consider some circumstances, my humanity steps forward and says, I must still give my advice, and my best advice, whenever asked from that quarter ; but as to future intimacy, there I pause. I could give you a detail of a friendship, on one side, that I am sure would pain you to know any thing could violate it ; but that to yourself.—Wonderful to tell ! but would you believe that I have had a present of L—— lately, from Miss B——, accompanied with the honour of a card too ?—Lord, what a happy fellow am I !

—I

—I dare say, now, was I to appear in her town after such a mark of distinction was known, I should be thrown over the Pier at high tide by some envious Adonis of the place. Am I not right, then, to keep away from such danger? And, faith, so I will. — Adieu, and assure the ladies how much I am their's and your's.

BL——R.

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LETTER L.

Mr. BL——R to W——A——, Esq.

March 6, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I WAS much obliged to your friendly congratulations ; I confess honestly my weakness was pleased.—I sent up your worship and our friend as candidates for the same representation as before, and hope to be made happy in hearing very shortly, ye are both duly elected. You entertained me greatly with your suppediture for politics at D——, viz. good roast and boiled.—Who, in the name of astonishment, would

would ever deal in politics, that can dabble in duck sauce? (for so do ye, most happy D——ites, in that and better.) I must own I should have relished the being within your jurisdiction on the 29th, for the pleasure of some roast as well as laugh; but that very long word *visitation*, tagged to my long-striding ideas, I soon perceived would be confined within no boundaries, so I e'en cut the string short, for conscience sake. To be sure, as you say, I should have got a *cheap confirmation*, had I come ---True---but what then? I should have exposed my *head*, and to every He, who judges with less candour than yourself, I never wish to do it. The inclosed was sent me from town the other day as a curiosity. Upon my honour, I think the beads begin to play merrily,

since the late act. What their cotillons
may end in, I won't pretend to say !
though I think you and I may have a
fair chance for the Louvre, as things go.
So take care of yourself in the mean
time, and believe me,

Dear Sir,

Always your's,

BL——R.

LET-

LETTER LI.

Mr. BL——R to A——S——, Esq.

May 15, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD my friend's agreeable letter by last post, and I now send you the papers mentioned in my former letter. Think that I should be drove to the necessity of writing No. 5! and then ask yourself to parallel the usage. Had you been present, when they were given up, (if I know you rightly) instantly you would have decided, that such an acquaintance was not the best sort of example for a young, innocent,

guileless female ; besides, you may remember I laid great stress upon example, when you asked my sentiments of the parties, at which time I derived it to come from the Dowager ; she is now much upon the decline, of course her spirits are so too. Then the attention to those matters that I call necessary daily examples, must drop to the ground ; and as my esteem for your family is no cold one, it makes me feel an anxiety for the muse's welfare. Though a coquet is not to be admired, I yet think there is an *opposite character* more to be censured. After all, another circumstance to be attended to is, what I term purity of acquaintance. The unfortunates in history generally have owed their fall to first impressions ; (but I will tire you no longer with my comments.) You make
me

me very happy by saying, the muse is doing something for me. Indeed I shall reverence it to a degree of idolatry, whatever it be, though (like a true school-boy) I shall reckon upon days till it arrives. How you came at a sight of my sermon, I am at a loss to judge, unless Dr. H—— told you the author; for I only wrote it to keep my promise with him, else you are certain, that a man who loves to sit down to a few stanzas of lyric poetry (such as it may happen to be) is but rarely disposed to change the merriment of his thoughts to the gravity of a sermon. Adieu, with my best wishes to ye all.

BL——R.

LETTER LIII.

Mr. BL——R to S—— B——, *Esq.*

1776.

DEAR B——,

I AM this moment returned from a few days excursion about my neighbourhood, where I spent my time in a most friendly intercourse, in the true sense of the expression; but let me hasten to tell you how kind I take your thinking of me at a distance, at the same time how little I know that I deserve it.

Harry the Eighth is a master piece,
and adjudged so by all I have shewn it
to

to—It is a great pity he should have stained his character with so much innocent blood. — B—'s duets are most pleasing compositions, and a most agreeable practice, infomuch, that when I do not instantaneously skip in tune up to A in double alt, I am not angry, and you well know my natural musical impetuosity. — Your Dential instruments are very complete ; I could have shewn my Teeth heretofore where I could not bite, but you have enabled me now to do both. — Have you heard that our friend Sir J— G— has at last turned his thoughts upon the comforts of a domesticated life ? If true, as I have the most powerful reasons for thinking so, it will really be matrimony, (not *matter of money*, according to the modern idea of conjugal happiness.) I dare say
you

you will think with me, that he deserves the completion of all he wishes for, if the qualities of the head and heart, like his, have any claim to sublunary comforts at all. Go, and do thou likewise, and who knows but it may tempt me to follow two such good examples, and so we become an order of Benedicts, (though not Benedictines.)

—When does your publication appear? Your friends pant with expectation to see it, and I, though last, not least.

—Remember me to Major N——, and tell him, I admire that calm, philosophic temper of his, that *æquo animo* which he possesses in so eminent a degree. To be sure, that man who has the *manège* of his own disposition, is in my opinion, if not the only, the properest person in the world for a horse officer,

officer.—I send you no news, for the best of reasons, because I have none to send, but you are without that excuse, as scarce an hour in the day passes, that does not present you with objects innumerable ; therefore write soon, and oblige

Your friend,

BL——R.

LET.

LETTER LIV.

Mr. BL——R to J—— B——, *Esq.*

June 8, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

I AM infinitely obliged to you for the story of the hermit's aids to rescue the young man from instant death.— You have given me an idea of that body (or order) of men at large, that I was not in possession of before. I always considered a Hermit in the exact point of view, that his emblems of Cave, Hour-glass, Book, and Skull, place him in; that is, in other words, a Being abstracted from every active occupation of life,
and

and totally devoted to heavenly meditation and contemplation ; Ever looking forwards on the road of futurity, and as little regarding present objects or things. But this philanthropic, good Man has shewn you, that the cares of Humanity to his fellow creatures are as much a part of his moral duty, as all his other religious exercises. How amiable ! Would that I could truly boast of more such Hermits amongst ourselves, when the wretch in poverty and rags might know where to find that relief, which would save him from a death of absolute want, (in plain English, starving, a case that too frequently happens in this country.) You say, the young man was recovered, and that he ever afterwards most gratefully acknowledged his preservation to that cause, where

where it was so properly due. I am glad of it, for the credit of human nature, as the returns of the heart are so rarely made for benefits received, be the size of them what they may. I never heard but of one instance of any person of my own country assuming such a character as I have been just describing, and that was a clergyman, who made a vow to continue a Recluse for the remainder of his life. He kept his Vow, and never stirred over the threshold of his Door once after, which was above Twenty Years ; but though he did not appear himself, his generous, good actions appeared for him. But I most terribly forget how long I am trespassing upon your attention, though I flatter myself with your excuse, as it is the first, and
will

will be the last time, I ever mean to write upon the subject, from the pain I feel in making comparisons no way to the honour of Christianity. However, I will conclude with a wish, that you and I may ever be the HERMITS of the HEART. Believe me most truly and sincerely,

Dear Sir,

Your's,

BL——R.

with its first part, the second part
was upon the subject of the
and in writing concerning the way to
the house of Christian. However
shall conclude with a note, that you
and I have ever been the friends of
the House. Believe me most truly
and faithfully, your friend,
and the friends of the House.
I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
John A. [Name]
[Address]
[City]
[State]
[Country]

will be the last time, I ever mean to write upon the subject, from the pain I feel in making comparisons in no wise to the honour of Christianity. However, I will conclude with a wish, that you and I may ever be the HERMITS of the HEART. Believe me most truly and sincerely,

Dear Sir,

Your's,

BL—R.

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will be the last time I ever mean to
write upon the subject. From the pain I
feel in making comparisons to no other
to the honour of Christianity. How-
ever, I will conclude with a wish that
you and I may ever be the friends of
the Faith. Believe me most truly
and sincerely,

Dear Sir,

Yours

Bliss

ORIGINAL POEMS

• N

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

O 2

ORIGINAL POEMS

VARIOUS SUBJECTS

(The following are the titles of the poems in this volume, and will be found in the index.)

ORIGINAL POEMS.

A N

A N S W E R

TO AN INVITATION OF THREE LADIES TO
A BALL.

TO ye, bright Nymphs, I write these lines,
(Sad subject of my grief and sorrow)

To tell ye, tho' my heart inclines

To kiss your fair hands all to-morrow;

Yet cruel fate has chain'd me down

To this dull, melancholy town,

And with such complicated spite,

I doubt if I outlive this night :

The more I read your dear petition,
 The worfe I bear my hard condition ;
 And when I think dear Charlton's plain
 Is to poffefs ye all again,
 With twenty thoufand pretty fancies,
 Exprefs'd in minuets and country dances,
 I rave one moment, then defpair,
 And curfe the haplefs name of Bl---r,
 Phillis begins the ball at night,
 In all her fteps, a Heinel quite ;
 And Flavia, with modeft eafe,
 Discovers her defire to pleafe ;
 Whilft Daphne, with an archnefs, fhews
 She's treading faft on both their toes.
 Think but, ye gods ! fuch happy time
 Shou'd e'er devolve on Charley Pr---e !
 That fate fhould once ordain, that he
 Shou'd thus engrofs the fav'rite Three !
 That firft with one, and then another,
 Shou'd dance, and laugh, and make a pother ;
And

And say the softest things in nature,
 And kiss the hand of his dear creature,
 And, perhaps, have the luck to fall,*
 And so be pitied by them all;
 And shou'd the allemands turn him sick,
 Out fly the smelling bottles quick
 From the Three Graces, whilst each strive
 To keep the poor dear soul alive —
 Who would not wish, (without a rhyme)
 To claim that happy name of Pr——e?
 Or for conciseness, more than whim,
 Suppose that it was even Pr——m?
 Or horse, or ass, or dog, or mule,
 Or even Master Tommy F——l?
 Since 'tis the high road to the favour
 Of three such sprightly nymphs so clever;
 Whilst other Damons may be look on,
 As much unpitied, as undone!——

* Very subject to fall in dancing.

ON
LEAVING A HAT AT A TAVERN,
AND
SENDING A WRONG ONE BY MISTAKE NEXT
DAY IN EXCHANGE.

THIS morn surpriz'd me with a hat,
And whether sent from this or that,
Or t'other motive, I declare,
Fits not the head of your friend Bl——r,
'Tis quite too macaronish for
The *tête* of such a country cur ;
For things a hundred miles from town,
Differ as much as squire and clown.
A country clown may make a squire,
But then he never can go higher ;
But in a town and country hat,
There's not that difference, that's flat.

This

This same chapeau I here return
 To B——t's vill, its proper bourne ;
 For surely, if my eyes tell true,
 The smart affair belongs to you.—
 Now, for a span, I'll change the scene,
 And view you in a serious vein.
 A *Penforoso*—can that be,
En tête à tête, with Patrick D——?
 I had ne'er left you on that sudden
 To sacrifice to Jacky Pudden,
 But for state reasons, which, remember,
 Can never hold till next November.
 'Tis needless here to say ought further,
 Or to enlarge on scene of murder :
 I mean, society's great death,
 (The thought alone just stops my breath.)
 Believe me, now, you have my reason,
 Therefore expect, that in due season
 Your friend will readily resign
 Himself to chat and sparkling wine ;

But

But neither formal Ham nor Jone
 Must be permitted to make one
 With you and I, whose looks become
 No serious, dull, stiff-starch'd humdrum ;
 But sprightly songs, and sprightlier stories—
 Good Sir, I mean not Whigs or Tories,
 But honest girls, whose air and shape
 Make each glass of the Tuscan grape
 Double its zest, and want its fellow,
 Till both us are just so mellow,
 That without aching heads, or sorrow,
 We might repeat the scene to-morrow.

EXTEM-

E X T E M P O R E,

ON MISS B——'S SNATCHING A LETTER OUT OF
MISS M——E'S HAND, AND THROWING IT
INTO THE FIRE IN A FROLIC.

SURE, B——, you could not be yourself;

You giddy, mischievous, little elf!

So unprovokedly to fret her,

By burning poor M——e's letter.

Believe, that, sweet retaliation

Falls on the pate of ev'ry station;

Therefore expect yourself, in turn,

To see a fav'rite scribble burn;

When heart-felt woe, and deep-fetch'd sighs,

Will gush the tears into your eyes,

And make you rue, for ever after,

Your ill-tim'd romping, flirt, and laughter.

A N
A P O L O G Y

FOR NOT DINING IN THE COUNTRY ON A VERY
SNOWY DAY.

A MORTIFIED creature
As any in Nature,
Sits writing this minute
On a broken old spinnet,
To tell his good friend,
What must be the end
Of his pleasing design,
At M——e to dine
This very cold day,
If the snow means to stay;
For who can stir out
Without danger of gout,
Or perhaps of a fall?
When his nag's feet must ball;

And

And if he should tumble,
 By Jove he would grumble;
 And should he not break
 The best joint in his neck,
 He might sprain his poor back,
 With some unlucky thwack,
 That might ruin his fame
 With the lovers of game,
 And he lose all credit
 With those he might bed it,
 And perhaps have it said,
 He's far worse than dead.
 No, rather than that,
 He'll forego the brisk chat,
 With ev'ry agreeable
 Dish at your table,
 And keep a strict Lent
 This bad day, with intent
 To recover the grace
 That is flown from his face.

Should

Should he once more get any,
 He'll sell for a penny
 The worth of a shilling,
 If to buy you be willing.
 But now, to be grave,
 (As his soul is to save)
 He is very much cross'd,
 That this day should be lost
 To the mirth, joy, and fun
 Of Anacreon's son
 Honest George, ever merry,
 And brisk as new perry ;
 Whose wit will outshine,
 And outsparkle his wine,
 With his puns so replete,
 That he's always a treat.
 But as Bl—r cannot come,
 He must play the humdrum,
 Or else see in idea
 The joy of being wi' you,

And

And fancy to hear
 George calling out, Bl——r !
 Why so dull at your dinner,
 You poor Lenten finner ?
 Bring your joke upon table
 As quick as you're able,
 And keep up the mirth,
 To which I've given birth ;
 When, perhaps, all the while
 Bl——r looks out of style,
 Distrest for an answer
 To give this Drawcanfir,
 Till Miss B——w, dear creature,
 With her wonted good nature,
 Says, " Gemmen, I fancy,
 " If my name was Nancy,
 " You'd think it not right,
 " I should lend this same wight
 " A *bon mot* for the night ;

“ Or,

" Or, if it was Betty,
 " Pray, why should it pet ye?
 " Or, suppose it was Fanny,
 " Can ye tell me of any
 " Objection would lay,
 " If I took my own way,
 " And help'd him to find
 " A good thing to his mind?"

The company agree,
 That no harm there can be
 In helping young master
 Through such a disaster,
 Save, that knowing her wit
 Was ne'er parried yet,
 And that her very eyes
 Could stop all replies;
 They therefore refuse
 To admit the kind muse,
 And leave Bl——r and his evil
 To himself and the d——l.

IMPROMP-

I M P R O M P T U,
ON MISS C——'S MANNER OF PLAYING THE
PIANO FORTE.

SINCE those fingers so nimbly can run o'er
the keys

Of your forte piano so sweet,

Who can doubt but Apollo himself you'd so
please,

He'd adore you for giving the treat.

Tho' Sk—e may vie, with her negligent wrist,

And smart turn of her hand, when she dances,

She soon may be equal'd in all she exprest,

As C——r can shew when she fancies,

WROTE ON THE FIRST LEAF OF A BLANK
MEMORANDUM BOOK, SENT TO
MISS SOPHIA SH——N:

GO, little book, and seek thy happier fate,
And dear Sophia's services await;
She'll use thee kindly, spotless as thou art,
And in thy bosom write her very heart.
Keep close her secrets, for in her thou'lt find
More real sweetness, with goodnature join'd,
Than ever reign'd before in woman kind;
Then shalt thou have her praises for thy worth,
And be the happiest little book on earth.

EXTEM-

E X T E M P O R E,

UPON THE BIRTH OF A CHILD OF THE
AUTHOR.

JOHN, do you hear? Go, fetch the drum,
A pretty little babe is come;
Bid the man, rub a dub, for joy,
Although 'tis not a bouncing boy—
What then? Allow it but a lass,
I'll drink her in this flowing glass
Of old red port, to wish her health;
And, mind, I don't except to wealth,
Enough of that to make her easy—
One sure ingredient to please you.
But with this health and wealth in store,
My friend cries—"Would you wish for more?"
—I would—the beauty of the mind
To every other beauty join'd.

She should be modest, meek, and mild,
 In innocence a very child;
 Nor should she want that sort of spirit
 You ever find attach'd to merit—
 Daring and bold in virtue's cause,
 Tho' not regardless of applause.
 When the result of conscious feeling
 And purest friendship boasts the telling,
 For ever ready to bestow
 The heart-felt sigh; the tear make flow,
 When dire distress, with pain and grief,
 Summon humanity's relief,
 Such darling attributes possessing,
 From old, from young, will find a blessing:
 And to be happy whilst on earth,
 Crown her with friendly Stewart's worth.

ON RECEIVING A PRESENT OF
A SILVER INK STAND,

HAPPY vehicle ! possessing
Endless source of joy and blessing,
Food of sentimental mind ;
Thy sev'ral votaries attend
With rapture, at thy shrine to bend,
Alike, all happily inclin'd,

The lover, to breathe out his sighs,
The languor of his heart and eyes,
Calls in thy pow'rful aid ;
In moving lines avows his tale,
In artless mode he pleads so well,
He charms the gen'rous maid.

The friend, as ready too to shew
 A conscious sense of honour's glow,
 His willing homage pays ;
 By thee enabled to explain
 The mighty sum of friendship's gain,
 Enjoys all happy days.

The poet, to supply his vein,
 Must thank thee o'er and o'er again,
 For thy indulgence giv'n :
 His fancy, heretofore to earth
 Confin'd, like genius of low birth,
 Will now soar fast to Heav'n,

Then happy I, who always have
 Thy streaming bounties as I crave,
 How envious is my state !
 Though happier far, could my poor lays
 Through thee transmit the donor's praise
 To time's remotest date.

I M P R O M P T U,

ON PRESENTING MAJOR B—— WITH A BRACE
OF PISTOLS BEFORE HE WENT TO AMERICA.

THE man who presents such dread weapons
as these,

Believe, my friend, is a lover of peace,

And though in strict phrase they are emblems
of war,

They come with much friendship, he safely can
swear:

May they prove faithful agents, on ev'ry alarm
Of each hostile attack, to secure you from harm,
And, compell'd e'er to use them, 'tis his earnest
desire,

They act true to their trust, then they'll never
miss fire.

E X T E M P O R E,

ON READING A LETTER OF MISS B--T--R'S.

HAIL! lovely maid, that canst inspire
 Blank paper with the muse's fire,
 And raise a theme to charm the ear,
 Whilst friendship drops the silent tear,
 Oh! with what raptures I behold
 Thy language, of superior mold,
 Embellish'd with that grace and ease,
 Sure to command, as well as please;
 Where wit and sense in ev'ry line
 Prove you descended from the Nine;
 Whilst judgement, taste, and fancy join'd,
 Applaud the greatness of your mind.
 Such pow'rs as these are rarely given,
 But to the favourites of Heaven.

I M P R O M P T U,

ON MISS SK——'S GENTEEL MANNER OF GIVING
HER HAND IN A MINUET.

WHEN Apelles the hands of Ma'am Venus
he drew,
One would surely have thought he'd been fit-
ting to you,
And could he *now* see with what grace you can
turn
Your's in dancing, 'tis clear, he with envy
would burn,
Convinc'd that all men of real taste must ap-
prove,
And decide in your favour, 'gainst his goddess
of Love.

TO

W—— C——R, Esq.

EXCUSE TO AN INVITATION TO DINNER.

TRUST me, Friend C——r, was I bad

As you describe, 'twou'd make me mad;

Though such a fever sorely ferrets,

Thank Jove, 'tis not upon my spirits;

Was that the case, I should avow

My inability to do,

On this good day, as I'm a finner,

The taking part of your good dinner,

I don't forget, what 'tis to dine

On your good beef, and your good wine;

And what still heightens the repast,

Is, that the master of the feast

Converses in true Attic taste.

Some

Some authors say, that line and rule
 Direct the hand of many a fool ;
 And so it may, where work's concern'd,
 (And then the money's to be earn'd) ;
 But mine's a diff'rent story quite,
 I must be idle, to be right,
 And patient wait the coming spring,
 To teach the birds and me to sing,
 And so renew my stock of health,
 More precious than Peruvian wealth ;
 Though to regain it cost some trouble,
 Without it, life is a mere bubble,
 A shadow, vision, what you please,
 There's no enjoyment, wanting ease.
 I hope, much sooner than the time,
 You've fix'd my monkism, by your rhyme,
 I shall be able, strong, and stout
 As Hercules, to gad about,
 And eat and drink, and say and do
 Ten thousand queerish freaks with you,

Nor

Nor e'er believe you, when you say,
 I shall be cloister'd up till May—
 No, Sir, I'll venture out in March,
 (A month, they say, when men look arch);
 But whether I look arch or no,
 To Lud's fam'd city shall I go,
 And there enjoy, with fresh delight,
 Fit pleasures for each day and night.

TO THE SAME,

ON A SECOND INVITATION.

THOUGH I nor cold nor surfeit got
 By vent'ring from my peaceful spot,
 Or got I both in passing through
 The bleakest roads to visit you,
 The coldest hour of night or day,
 Would never frighten me away;
 But frailties, such as I possess,
 (None of the smallest, I confess)
 Remind me, that some little caution
 Is needful to health's preservation;
 For instance now, a friend like you,
 His good old port presents to view,
 With social smiles and easy grace,
 (Companions of the self-same face)

Can

Can any be so rude, though able,
 To rise from chair, and quit the table?
 Would my philosophy incline,
 Do you suppose, to shun the wine,
 And run to seek some other quarter,
 Wherein to write in praise of water?
 Pure water, I must own, is good
 To thin, as well as cool the blood;
 But your advice in this cold weather,
 I'm well assur'd would be, do neither:
 Where could such doctrine, think you, tend?
 Unless at once to put an end
 To my chaste plan, laid down before,
 And turn my virtue out of door;
 The consequence of that would be
 The death of my sobriety.
 I love a bottle, don't mistake me,
 And if I don't, may old Scratch take me;
 But how? 'Tis for the pleasure of a friend,
 Whose mind and temper will unbend,

As the wine warms, and makes him feel
 A conscious worth in friendship's zeal.
 Decanted wine, we ever find,
 Proves there's no sediment behind;
 And so with friendship, when 'tis pure,
 'Tis just the self-same thing, we're sure:
 For such enjoyments, Powers divine!
 Grant I may always relish wine;
 For other purposes, (can I wish worse?)
 Be metamorphos'd to a horse,
 And so condemn'd on sledge to trail
 Sad, heavy loads of ill-brew'd ale,
 Till weary'd out, an arrant slave,
 Die in the streets, and want a grave.

EXTEM-

E X T E M P O R E,

UPON A LOAF THAT A LADY HAD MADE AND
SENT TO W—— SK——R, ESQ.

A LOAF of St. Catherine's own making;
Friend Sk——r,

Comes with this, and I hope in right time for
your dinner,

And whether a good one or not, I can't say,
But of that you'll inform me on some future
day;

It was made with clean hands, and it comes
with good will,

And contains neither alum, nor any such ill;

Therefore eat it, good Sir, without stir, fuss,
or pother,

And if you should like it, she'll make you its
brother.

She

She joins with your humble in compliments

fending,

Which brings my few rhymes to a very fair

ending.

Q

ON

O N

JOHNY GILPIN'S JOCKYSHIP.

SEE, how the loobies gape and stare! •

One says, " Poor Johnny's off, I swear ;"

Cries Tib, " He'll pull poor Grizzle's mane

" So hard, 'twill never grow again :"

" Lord ! how indecent," (bawls Rebecc.)

" To see the creature's naked neck !"

Do, Johnny, try to keep thy feat,

Thou then wilt do a wondrous feat ;

'Twill thy dear wife's poor brains quite addle,

To think thou can't keep in thy faddle :

Should it so prove, for ever after

Of all the neighbourhood thou'lt be the laugh-
ter,

And better far that thou hadst dy'd,

Than have them say, " Johnny can't ride."

Says

Says Dick, " He'll ne'er ride more on earth,
 " I'll lay him ev'ry *sous* I'm worth ;
 " Though to his joy (which makes all even)
 " He'll want no horse, nor mare in Heav'n ;
 " And if his wife have but the grace
 " To fend him to so good a place,
 " He then may anthems sing on clouds,
 " Among his brother Bucks in crowds,
 " And say, If all men's wives below
 " Would act as mine was used to do,
 " And give such genuine proofs of love,
 " They'd ride with me in realms above."

T O

W—— C——, ESQ.

IN ANSWER TO WHAT HE STILED A
LILLIPUTIAN ODE.

YOUR Lilliput ode

Was really so good,
That I read it with rapture,
As such a rich capture
Is sure to produce
Both pleasure and use,
But where shall I find
Such rhymes to my mind,
To supply my occasion,
In such a profusion?
Your luxuriant vein
Of rich humour and strain
Knows no bounds in metre,
I swear by Saint Peter,

But

But gains vigour and strength
 As it reaches in length ;
 Then each line so sterling
 Inchant's me like Merlin,
 And makes me confess
 My poetic distress,
 And despair e'er to reach
 One fifth part of your pitch :
 But what makes it greater,
 It springs up with nature,
 And wants not the force
 Used in aid of dull verse.
 H—— wrote to your agent
 About M——n, regent,
 Concerning his bearing
 Your cause to a hearing ;
 And from B——w——ke's exactness
 You'll hear with correctness,
 When the court does intend
 That business to end.

The effect, I well know,
 Will at once be, to shew
 That three bottles of port
 Will be very far short
 Of your stint, when you chuse
 To push on a brisk booze,
 And lay flat on the floor
 Every son of a W—,
 Who presumes to suppose
 He can ape your large dose
 Without peril of gout,
 And the d——l to boot,
 My pretty Miss Bell
 Is, I hope, very well.
 To-morrow being Sunday,
 We'll play Haydn on Monday,
 Unless she likes better,
 The dominical letter ;
 And I see no crime
 In a sabbath day's chime

On a forte piano,
Con Italiano,
 In a snug, private room,
 To drive off the humdrum,
 Any more than an organ,
 Played in church time by Worgan;
 Since the difference of place
 Little alters the case;
 For all superstition
 I drive to perdition,
 And see no offence
 In being rul'd by plain sense.

TO THE SAME.

AN EXCUSE,

THIS moment, my friend, I'm return'd from
the church,

Where, I justly may say, I've been caught in
the lurch,

And what's more, the coach is just order'd, I see,
To wheel my old mother to L—— to drink tea.

Let duty, or what you please, stick in the case,
At the foremention'd town she has summon'd
my face,

Else by Jove, I perceive, I shall be in disgrace.

The deuce take this afternoon preaching, I say,
Had I known it in time, I had then kept away,
But to-morrow, thank Heav'n! no preaching,
that's sure,

Then I'll be at your mansion at least for an hour,

And

And as for my pupil, *sans compliments* sending,
 She'll find me at her forte piano attending;
 Much about the same time, if your fiddle's in
 order,
 If not, I protest I'll acquaint the Recorder,
 Before whom, if my fair one assigns no good
 reason,
 Depend on't, his *mittimus* sends her to prison,
 Unless she can charm both his ears with a strain,
 That will make him recall his commitment
 again.

ANSWER

ANSWER TO SAME,

O N

AN ATTEMPT OF HIS TO IMITATE SWIFT,
IN LOW RHYME.

YOUR poetic epistle, of most whimsical me-
tre, this ev'ning

Arriv'd by your servant,

And the effect it produc'd in your humble ex-
ceeds all believing,

It made him so fervent.

My ragged old usurer (uncircumcis'd tho' he
does prove)

Consents to allow,

Rather than have you fume, fret, and swear by
the beard of old Jove,

I may dine with you.

But

But for such his kind licence confines me each
hour in a morning

To vile, musty papers,

Most strictly forbidding paint, patches, and all
bodily adorning,

Down to cutting of capers.

Had some puny-stomach'd nymph long'd for de-
licate beef steak and onion,

I'd incurr'd no disgrace

In postponing my visit till to-morrow, 'tis my
fast opinion,

And let her's took it's place.

I'm much pleas'd to be told my young Clio so
soon has got ready

The harmonious repast;

Her performance of late has become so remark-
ably steady,

Her music's a feast.

I smile

I smile at her thought of the musical cook and
confectioner,

When she gives the desert;

There will be but little required to perfection
her,

She is now so expert.

My presentiment tells me, she will very soon
turn the table

On confectioner and cook,

By convincing them both, how much better than
they she is able,

To play without book.

Her compliment too, full as sweet as the dear
fugarcandy,

Is quite flatt'ring to hear,

And conceiv'd with that wit, not unworthy the
pen of 'Squire Shandy,

Has demolish'd T. Bl——r;

Whose

Whose vanity so tickled makes him think him-
 self a Dilettanti,
 Or judge of real giusto,
 Though in fact all his knowledge therein, at
 the best is as scanty,
 As either H——r, or B——w.

A N
A N S W E R
T O

MISS S—E AND MISS S—N,
ON THEIR CHARGING THE AUTHOR WITH DIS-
APPOINTING THEM OF AN EXCURSION, THE
DAY BEFORE.

CRUEL S—e and S—n's charge, 'tis
too clear,
Has forely disturbed the peace of T—Bl—r;
Such ill-founded reproof him so haunts, jades,
and ferrets,
That awake he's dismayed, and at night dreams
of spirits.

For a moment, dear ladies, reflect on the case,
And ask your own hearts, if you read in his face
Of guilt, the last night, the least shadow or trace?

If

If not, be assur'd his desire was to please you,
 Far diff'rent idea from that to distress you;
 But your sweet stinging compliment meant at
 the end

Of your friendly, kind rhymes, forsooth, you
 must send,

By the way to arrest his career of sublime,
 And headlong to throw him down level with
 P——e.

Be it so—if you're gratify'd, he'll not complain,
 But bear with a stoical virtue his pain,
 If he sees you once smile, and look pleasant
 again.

Don't and in your own mind, you read in his face
 Always, I say, no more
 Secret sorrow and shadow of pain

AN ACCOUNT OF
AN EVENING'S WALK IN THE SNOW.

ADDRESSED TO MISS B——.

IN happy ditty went I home,
Thinking upon the day to come;
Good Sunday is the day I mean,
(Good thoughts, you know, are always clean)
Though what befell me in my way,
And threw me into fore dismay,
A slipp'ry trick of Madam Fate)
In briefest manner shall relate.
Know then, some elf behind a bush
Starts forth with such a d—v'lish rush,
No sturdy bull, or shagged bear,
Could have inspir'd a stronger fear;
Away I ran, I saw no water,
Till in it, when I did bespatter

Shoes,

Shoes, stockings, breeches, and eke coat,
 And made them all scarce worth a groat;
 But that was nothing to the dread
 Of a home lecture on my head;
 That Thought so dwelt upon my mind,
 I had forgot to look behind:
 But, thank my stars, I found old Madam
 As mild as Eve and meek as Adam.
 Pleas'd to the soul at where I'd been,
 At what I'd heard, and what I'd seen,
 And when I said, I'd scarcely talk'd
 Ten words, she laugh'd, and said I jok'd;
 For well she knew his godship Eolus
 Did never fail to work my bellows,
 And talk I must, was death to follow,
 Thus was I by old Ma'am beat hollow,
 And glad of any snug retreat,
 Made her quite proud of my defeat.
 But now retir'd, and chamber fire
 Burning, obedient to desire,

Invites me to prolong my scribble,
If I can do't without a quibble:

Alas! a quibble, like a pun,
That dear provocative of fun,

When I reflect in what great stead
It sometimes stands a man in need,

And like the jewel in pig's snout,
He's oft hard set to poke it out;

But soon as it is brought to light,
Secures his eclat for the night.

But stop, my pen, the clock strikes two,
And I've got twenty things to do,

Ere to a solitary bed I creep,
And great the odds I may not sleep,

Nor with I, but to think of you,
To all this world besides, Adieu.

T O

W—— C——, Esq.

THO' my friend's pleas'd to style me the son
of Apollo,

I'm fully convinc'd his rhymes beat me hollow;
His lines, 'tis no wonder, should run smooth
and fine,

Since he's always inspir'd by the musical Nine.

What signifies Pegasus, tho' he can fly,

He'll ne'er reach the Muses, they're seated so
high,

So greatly beyond all mechanical rule

To attempt such a flight would proclaim the
dull fool :

No, if Bl—r skirts the foot of the mount, he's
content,

And leaves his friend C—r to make the ascent,

Whose genius, so suited to such an abode,
Will tempt the bright nymphs to create him a
god;

Then when to old earth, in his triumphal car,
He descends, Miss Bell will present him an air,
Or concerto so pleasing, no mortals can tell
Who excels, she on earth, or 'Squire Orpheus
in hell;

As to making of stones and old stumps of trees
dance,

More than that's to be done, both in Italy and
France,

Ev'ry day in the year——She'll charm crabb'd
old women,

Make prudes turn good-natur'd (something ra-
ther uncommon)

Old misers their ill-gotten hoards give away,
Lawyers honest, priests humble, devotionists
gay;

Ev'n

Ev'n aldermen too dine without turning beasts,
From over-cramm'd turtle at Mansion House
feasts;

Old age become young, pain be cancell'd for
pleasure,

And all Nature shall dance to fair Anna bell's
measure.

To

MISS P—— OF B——E IN ESSEX,

WITH A PRESENT OF A SALMON.

DEAR Madam, believe I'm rejoic'd that the
fish

Prov'd so relishing, tasty, and pleasing a dish;
And what adds to my joy, is to know it arriv'd
At your mansion as fresh as it was when it liv'd.
You ask for some poetry—Jupiter Ammon!

What theme can I write on, unless upon sal-
mon?

And since you do like it, depend on my care
To present you with some, full as good, the
next year:

My county is fam'd for producing good cheer,
Such as cream cheefes, venifon, hams, and such
geer.

We're

We're honest folks too in our general dealing,
And few crimes we commit, save a little horse-
stealing ;

But that's more to keep up the spirit of charter,
For some of us must ev'ry year have a garter
Of hemp, closely noos'd to the neck, at a place,
Which, for decency's sake, I will leave you to
guess.

When your cousin had read me that part of
your letter,

To tell him your health was so wondrously
better,

I felt the good news with that friendship I bore,

And wish'd you to live to a hundred and more ;

Then gently to slide down the valley of rest,

On your road to your seat of delight with the

blest—

Mrs. Bl—r too presents you with ev'ry good
wish,

So, dear Ma'am, here concludes my poetical dish,

Should

Should it raise e'er a smile, 'twill do all I desire,
'Tis then welcome to blaze in your Dining-
room fire.—

THE END.